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HENRY IV.—PART II.

THE WORKS OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FROM THE TEXT OF THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE'S
FOURTH EDITION, WITH AN ARRANGEMENT
OF HIS GLOSSARY

IN EIGHT VOLUMES

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BLH

THE SECOND PART OF

KING HENRY IV.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING HENRY the Fourth.
HENRY, prince of Wales, afterwards King Henry V., } his sons.
THOMAS, duke of Clarence, } his sons.
PRINCE JOHN OF LANCASTER, } his sons.
PRINCE HUMPHREY OF GLOSTER, } his sons.
EARL OF WARWICK.
EARL OF WESTMORELAND.
EARL OF SURREY.
GOWER.
HARCOURT.
BLUNT.
Lord Chief-Justice of the King's Bench.
An Attendant on the Chief-Justice.
EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.
SCROOP, archbishop of York.
LORD MOWBRAY.
LORD HASTINGS.
LORD BARDOLPH.
SIR JOHN COLEVILE.
TRAVERS and MORTON, retainers of Northumberland.
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.
His Page.
BARDOLPH.
PISTOL.
POINTZ.
PETO.
SHALLOW, } country justices.
SILENCE. } country justices.
DAVY, servant to Shallow.
MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, and BULLCALF, recruits.
FANG and SNARE, sheriff's officers.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND.
LADY PERCY.
MISTRESS QUICKLY, hostess of a tavern in Eastcheap.
DOLL TEARSHEET.

Lords and Attendants; Porters, Drawers, Beadles, Grooms, etc.

Rumor, the Presenter.
A Dancer, speaker of the epilogue.

SCENE—*England.*

INDUCTION.

Warkworth. Before Northumberland's castle.

Enter Rumor, *painted full of tongues.*

Rum. Open your ears; for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumor speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commenced on this ball of earth:
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.
I speak of peace, while covert enmity,
Under the smile of safety, wounds the world:
And who but Rumor, who but only I,
Make fearful musters and prepar'd defense,
Whilst the big year, swoln with some other grief,
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,
And no such matter? Rumor is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures;
And of so easy and so plain a stop,
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still-discordant wavering multitude,
Can play upon it. But what need I thus
My well-known body to anatomize
Among my household? Why is Rumor here?
I run before King Harry's victory;
Who, in a bloody field by Shrewsbury,
Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,
Quenching the flame of bold rebellion
Even with the rebels' blood. But what mean I
To speak so true at first? my office is
To noise abroad, that Harry Monmouth fell
Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword;
And that the king before the Douglas' rage
Stoop'd his anointed head as low as death.
This have I rumor'd through the pleasant towns
Between that royal field of Shrewsbury
And this worm-eaten hold of ragged stone,
Where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland,

Lies crafty-sick : the posts come tiring on,
And not a man of them brings other news
Than they have learn'd of me : from Rumor's tongues
They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true wrongs
[*Exit.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The same.*

Enter Lord BARDOLPH.

L. Bard. Who keeps the gate here, ho ?

Enter Porter, *above.*

Where is the earl ?

Port. What shall I say you are ?

L. Bard. Tell thou the earl
That the Lord Bardolph doth attend him here.

Port. His lordship is walk'd forth into the orchard :
Please it your honor, knock but at the gate,
And he himself will answer.

L. Bard. Here comes the earl.
[*Exit Porter above.*

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

North. What news, Lord Bardolph ? every minute now
Should be the father of some stratagem :
The times are wild ; contention, like a horse
Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose,
And bears down all before him.

L. Bard. Noble earl,
I bring you certain news from Shrewsbury.

North. Good, an God will !

L. Bard. As good as heart can wish :-
The king is almost wounded to the death ;
And, in the fortune of my lord your son,
Prince Harry slain outright ; and both the Blunts
Kill'd by the hand of Douglas ; young Prince John
And Westmoreland and Stafford fled the field ;
And Harry Monmouth's brawn, the hulk Sir John,
Is prisoner to your son : O, such a day,
So fought, so follow'd, and so fairly won,

Came not till now to dignify the times,
Since Cæsar's fortunes!
North. How is this deriv'd?
Saw you the field? came you from Shrewsbury?
L. Bard. I spake with one, my lord, that came from thence,
A gentleman well bred and of good name,
That freely render'd me these news for true.
North. Here comes my servant Travers, whom I sent
On Tuesday last to listen after news.
L. Bard. My lord, I over-rode him on the way;
And he is furnish'd with no certainties
More than he haply may retail from me.

Enter TRAVERS.

North. Now, Travers, what good tidings come with you?
Tra. My lord, Sir John Umfreville turn'd me back
With joyful tidings; and, being better hors'd,
Out-rode me. After him came spurring hard
A gentleman, almost forspent with speed,
That stopp'd by me to breathe his bloodied horse.
He ask'd the way to Chester; and of him
I did demand what news from Shrewsbury:
He told me that rebellion had ill-luck,
And that young Harry Percy's spur was cold.
With that, he gave his able horse the head,
And, bending forward, struck his armèd heels
Against the panting sides of his poor jade
Up to the rowel-head; and starting so,
He seem'd in running to devour the way,
Staying no longer question.
North. Ha! — Again:
Said he young Harry Percy's spur was cold?
Of Hotspur, Coldspur? that rebellion
Had met ill luck?
L. Bard. My lord, I'll tell you what;
If my young lord your son have not the day,
Upon mine honor, for a silken point
I'll give my barony; ne'er talk of it.
North. Why should the gentleman that rode by Travers
Give, then, such instances of loss?

L. Bard. Who, he?
He was some hilding fellow, that had stol'n
The horse he rode on; and, upon my life,
Spoke at a venture.— Look, here comes more news.

Enter MORTON.

North. Yea, this man's brow, like to a title-leaf,
Foretells the nature of a tragic volume:
So looks the strand whereon th' imperious flood
Hath left a witness'd usurpation.—
Say, Morton, didst thou come from Shrewsbury?
Mor. I ran from Shrewsbury, my noble lord;
Where hateful death put on his ugliest mask
To fright our party.
North. How doth my son and brother?
Thou tremblest; and the whiteness in thy cheek
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand.
Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone,
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,
And would have told him half his Troy was burnt;
But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue,
And I my Percy's death ere thou report'st it.
This thou wouldst say, "Your son did thus and thus;
Your brother thus; so fought the noble Douglas;"
Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds:
But in the end, to stop my ear indeed,
Thou hast a sigh to blow away this praise,
Ending with "Brother, son, and all are dead."
Mor. Douglas is living, and your brother, yet;
But, for my lord your son,—
North. Why, he is dead.
See what a ready tongue suspicion hath!
He that but fears the thing he would not know
Hath by instinct knowledge from others' eyes
That what he fear'd is chancèd. Yet speak, Morton;
Tell thou thy earl his divination lies,
And I will take it as a sweet disgrace,
And make thee rich for doing me such wrong.
Mor. You are too great to be by me gainsaid:
Your spirit is too true, your fears too certain.
North. Yet, for all this, say not that Percy's dead.

I see a strange confession in thine eye :
Thou shak'st thy head, and hold'st it fear or sin
To speak a truth. If he be slain, say so ;
The tongue offends not that reports his death :
And he doth sin that doth belie the dead ;
Not he which says the dead is not alive.
Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news
Hath but a losing office ; and his tongue
Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,
Remember'd knolling a departing friend.

L. Bard. I cannot think, my lord, your son is dead.

Mor. I'm sorry I should force you to believe
That which I would to God I had not seen ;
But these mine eyes saw him in bloody state,
Rendering faint quittance, wearied and outbreath'd,
To Harry Monmouth ; whose swift wrath beat down
The never-daunted Percy to the earth,
From whence with life he never more sprung up.
In few, his death — whose spirit lent a fire
Even to the dullest peasant in his camp —
Being bruited once, took fire and heat away
From the best-temper'd courage in his troops ;
For from his metal was his party steel'd ;
Which once in him abated, all the rest
Turn'd on themselves, like dull and heavy lead :
And as the thing that's heavy in itself,
Upon enforcement flies with greatest speed,
So did our men, heavy in Hotspur's loss,
Lend to this weight such lightness with their fear,
That arrows fly not swifter toward their aim
Than did our soldiers, aiming at their safety,
Fly from the field. Then was the noble Worcester
Too soon ta'en prisoner ; and that furious Scot,
The bloody Douglas, whose well-laboring sword
Had three times slain th' appearance of the king,
Gan vail his stomach, and did grace the shame
Of those that turn'd their backs ; and in his flight,
Stumbling in fear, was took. The sum of all
Is, that the king hath won ; and hath sent out
A speedy power t' encounter you, my lord,
Under the conduct of young Lancaster
And Westmoreland. This is the news at full.

North. For this I shall have time enough to mourn.
In poison there is physic; and these news,
Having been well, that would have made me sick,
Being sick, have in some measure made me well:
And as the wretch, whose fever-weaken'd joints,
Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,
Impatient of his fit, breaks like a fire
Out of his keeper's arms; even so my limbs,
Weaken'd with grief, being now enrag'd with grief,
Are thrice themselves. Hence, therefore, thou nice crutch!
A scaly gauntlet now, with joints of steel,
Must glove this hand: and hence, thou sickly quoif!
Thou art a guard too wanton for the head
Which princes, flesh'd with conquest, aim to hit.
Now bind my brows with iron; and approach
The ragged'st hour that time and spite dare bring
To frown upon th' enrag'd Northumberland!
Let heaven kiss earth! now let not Nature's hand
Keep the wild flood confin'd! let order die!
And let this world no longer be a stage
To feed contention in a lingering act;
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain
Reign in all bosoms, that each heart being set
On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,
And darkness be the burier of the dead!

Tra. This strained passion doth you wrong, my lord.

L. Bard. Sweet earl, divorce not wisdom from your honor.

Mor. The lives of all your loving complices
Lean on your health; the which, if you give o'er
To stormy passion, must perforce decay.
You cast th' event of war, my noble lord,
And summ'd th' account of chance, before you said,
"Let us make head." It was your presurmise
That, in the dole of blows, your son might drop;
You knew he walk'd o'er perils on an edge,
More likely to fall in than to get o'er;
You were advis'd his flesh was capable
Of wounds and scars, and that his forward spirit
Would lift him where most trade of danger rang'd:

Yet did you say, "Go forth;" and none of this.
Thou strongly apprehended, could restrain
The stiff-borne action: what hath, then, befall'n,
Or what hath this bold enterprise brought forth,
More than that being which was like to be?

L. Bard. We all that are engagèd to this loss
Knew that we ventur'd on such dangerous seas,
That if we wrought out life, 'twas ten to one;
And yet we ventur'd for the gain propos'd
Chok'd the respect of likely peril fear'd;
And since we are o'er set, venture again.
Come, we will all put forth, body and goods.

Mor. 'Tis more than time: and, my most noble lord,
I hear for certain, and do speak the truth,
The gentle Archbishop of York is up
With well-appointed powers: he is a man
Who with a double surety binds his followers.
My lord your son had only but the corpse',
But shadows and the shows of men, to fight;
For that same word, rebellion, did divide
The action of their bodies from their souls;
And they did fight with queasiness, constrain'd,
As men drink potions; that their weapons only
Seem'd on our side, but, for their spirits and souls,
This word, rebellion, it had froze them up,
As fish are in a pond. But now the bishop
Turns insurrection to religion:
Suppos'd sincere and holy in his thoughts,
He's follow'd both with body and with mind;
And doth enlarge his rising with the blood
Of fair King Richard, scrap'd from Pomfret stones;
Derives from heaven his quarrel and his cause;
Tells them he doth bestride a bleeding land,
Gasping for life under great Bolingbroke;
And more and less do flock to follow him.

North. I knew of this before; but, to speak truth,
This present grief had wip'd it from my mind.
Go in with me; and counsel every man
The aptest way for safety and revenge:
Get posts and letters, and make friends with speed,—
Never so few, and never yet more need.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *London. A street.*

Enter FALSTAFF, *with his* Page *bearing his sword and buckler.*

Fal. Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my water?

Page. He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water; but, for the party that owed it, he might have more diseases than he knew for.

Fal. Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me: the brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent any thing that tends to laughter, more than I invent or is invented on me: I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. I do here walk before thee like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. If the prince put thee into my service for any other reason than to set me off, why then I have no judgment. Thou whoreson mandrake, thou art fitter to be worn in my cap than to wait at my heels. I was never manned with an agate till now: but I will set you neither in gold nor silver, but in vile apparel, and send you back again to your master, for a jewel,—the juvenal, the prince your master, whose chin is not yet fledged. I will sooner have a beard grow in the palm of my hand than he shall get one on his cheek; and yet he will not stick to say his face is a face-royal: God may finish it when he will, 'tis not a hair amiss yet: he may keep it still as a face-royal, for a barber shall never earn sixpence out of it; and yet he'll be crowing as if he had writ man ever since his father was a bachelor. He may keep his own grace, but he's almost out of mine, I can assure him. — What said Master Dombledon about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?

Page. He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph: he would not take his bond and yours; he liked not the security.

Fal. Let him be damned, like the glutton! pray God his tongue be hotter! — A whoreson Achitophel! a rascally yeaforsooth knave! to bear a gentleman in hand, and then stand upon security! — The whoreson smoothpates do now wear nothing but high shoes, and bunches of keys at their girdles; and if a man is thorough with

them in honest taking-up, then they must stand upon security. I had as lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth as offer to stop it with security. I looked 'a should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am a true knight, and he sends me security. Well, he may sleep in security; for he hath the horn of abundance, and the lightness of his wife shines through it: and yet cannot he see, though he have his own lantern to light him.— Where's Bardolph?

Page. He's gone into Smithfield to buy your worship a horse.

Fal. I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a horse in Smithfield: an I could get me but a wife in the stews, I were manned, horsed, and wived.

Page. Sir, here comes the nobleman that committed the prince for striking him about Bardolph.

Fal. Wait close; I will not see him.

Enter the Lord Chief Justice *and an Attendant.*

Ch. Just. What's he that goes there?

Atten. Falstaff, an't please your lordship.

Ch. Just. He that was in question for the robbery?

Atten. He, my lord: but he hath since done good service at Shrewsbury; and, as I hear, is now going with some charge to the Lord John of Lancaster.

Ch. Just. What, to York? Call him back again.

Atten. Sir John Falstaff!

Fal. Boy, tell him I am deaf.

Page. You must speak louder; my master is deaf.

Ch. Just. I am sure he is, to the hearing of any thing good.— Go, pluck him by the elbow; I must speak with him.

Atten. Sir John,—

Fal. What! a young knave, and begging! Is there not wars? is there not employment? doth not the king lack subjects? do not the rebels need soldiers? Though it be a shame to be on any side but one, it is worse shame to beg than to be on the worst side, were it worse than the name of rebellion can tell how to make it.

Atten. You mistake me, sir.

Fal. Why, sir, did I say you were an honest man? set-

ting my knighthood and my soldiership aside, I had lied in my throat, if I had said so.

Atten. I pray you, sir, then set your knighthood and your soldiership aside; and give me leave to tell you, you lie in your throat, if you say I am any other than an honest man.

Fal. I give thee leave to tell me so! I lay aside that which grows to me! If thou gettest any leave of me, hang me; if thou takest leave, thou wert better be hanged. You hunt counter: hence! avaunt!

Atten. Sir, my lord would speak with you.

Ch. Just. Sir John Falstaff, a word with you.

Fal. My good lord! — God give your lordship good time of day. I am glad to see your lordship abroad: I heard say your lordship was sick: I hope your lordship goes abroad by advice. Your lordship, though not clean past your youth, hath yet some smack of age in you, some relish of the saltness of time; and I most humbly beseech your lordship to have a reverent care of your health.

Ch. Just. Sir John, I sent for you before your expedition to Shrewsbury.

Fal. An't please your lordship, I hear his majesty is returned with some discomfort from Wales.

Ch. Just. I talk not of his majesty: — you would not come when I sent for you.

Fal. And I hear, moreover, his highness is fallen into this same whoreson apoplexy.

Ch. Just. Well, God mend him! — I pray you, let me speak with you.

Fal. This apoplexy is, as I take it, a kind of lethargy, an't please your lordship; a kind of sleeping in the blood, a whoreson tingling.

Ch. Just. What tell you me of it? be it as it is.

Fal. It hath its original from much grief, from study, and perturbation of the brain: I have read the cause of his effects in Galen: it is a kind of deafness.

Ch. Just. I think you are fallen into the disease; for you hear not what I say to you.

Fal. Very well, my lord, very well: rather, an't please you, it is the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking, that I am troubled withal.

Ch. Just. To punish you by the heels would amend the attention of your ears; and I care not if I do become your physician.

Fal. I am as poor as Job, my lord, but not so patient: your lordship may minister the potion of imprisonment to me in respect of poverty; but how I should be your patient to follow your prescriptions, the wise may make some dram of a scruple, or, indeed, a scruple itself.

Ch. Just. I sent for you, when there were matters against you for your life, to come speak with me.

Fal. As I was then advised by my learned counsel in the laws of this land-service, I did not come.

Ch. Just. Well, the truth is, Sir John, you live in great infamy.

Fal. He that buckles him in my belt cannot live in less.

Ch. Just. Your means are very slender, and your waste is great.

Fal. I would it were otherwise; I would my means were greater, and my waist slenderer.

Ch. Just. You have misled the youthful prince.

Fal. The young prince hath misled me: I am the fellow with the great belly, and he my dog.

Ch. Just. Well, I am loth to gall a new-healed wound: your day's service at Shrewsbury hath a little gilded over your night's exploit on Gadshill: you may thank the unquiet time for your quiet o'er-posting that action.

Fal. My lord,—

Ch. Just. But since all is well, keep it so: wake not a sleeping wolf.

Fal. To wake a wolf is as bad as to smell a fox.

Ch. Just. What! you are as a candle, the better part burnt out.

Fal. A wassail candle, my lord; all tallow: if I did say of wax, my growth would approve the truth.

Ch. Just. There is not a white hair on your face but should have his effect of gravity.

Fal. His effect of gravy, gravy, gravy.

Ch. Just. You follow the young prince up and down, like his ill angel.

Fal. Not so, my lord; your ill angel is light; but I hope he that looks upon me will take me without weighing: and yet, in some respects, I grant, I cannot go:— I

cannot tell. Virtue is of so little regard in these costermonger times, that true valor is turned bear-herd: pregnancy is made a tapster, and hath his quick wit wasted in giving reckonings: all the other gifts appertinent to man, as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry. You that are old consider not the capacities of us that are young; you measure the heat of our livers with the bitterness of your galls: and we that are in the vaward of your youth, I must confess, are wags too.

Ch. Just. Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye? a dry hand? a yellow cheek? a white beard? a decreasing leg? an increasing belly? is not your voice broken? your wind short? your chin double? your wit single? and every part about you blasted with antiquity? and will you yet call yourself young? Fie, fie, fie, Sir John!

Fal. My lord, I was born about three of the clock in the afternoon, with a white head and something a round belly. For my voice, I have lost it with hallooing, and singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will not: the truth is, I am only old in judgment and understanding; and he that will caper with me for a thousand marks, let him lend me the money, and have at him. For the box of the ear that the prince gave you, he gave it like a rude prince, and you took it like a sensible lord. I have checked him for it; and the young lion repents,—marry, not in ashes and sackcloth, but in new silk and old sack.

Ch. Just. Well, God send the prince a better companion!

Fal. God send the companion a better prince! I cannot rid my hands of him.

Ch. Just. Well, the king hath severed you and Prince Harry: I hear you are going with Lord John of Lancaster against the Archbishop and the Earl of Northumberland.

Fal. Yea; I thank your pretty sweet wit for it. But look you, pray, all you that kiss my lady Peace at home, that our armies join not in a hot day; for, by the lord, I take but two shirts out with me, and I mean not to

sweat extraordinarily: if it be a hot day, an I brandish any thing but my bottle, I would I might never spit white again. There is not a dangerous action can peep out his head, but I am thrust upon it: well, I cannot last ever: but it was alway yet the trick of our English nation, if they have a good thing, to make it too common. If ye will needs say I am an old man, you should give me rest. I would to God my name were not so terrible to the enemy as it is: I were better to be eaten to death with a rust than to be scoured to nothing with perpetual motion.

Ch. Just. Well, be honest, be honest; and God bless your expedition!

Fal. Will your lordship lend me a thousand pound to furnish me forth?

Ch. Just. Not a penny, not a penny; you are too impatient to bear crosses. Fare you well: commend me to my cousin Westmoreland.

[*Exeunt Chief Justice and Attendant.*

Fal. If I do, fillip me with a three-man beetle.— A man can no more separate age and covetousness than 'a can part young limbs and lechery: but the gout galls the one, and the pox pinches the other; and so both the degrees prevent my curses.—Boy!

Page. Sir?

Fal. What money is in my purse?

Page. Seven groats and two pence.

Fal. I can get no remedy against this consumption of the purse: borrowing only lingers and lingers it out, but the disease is incurable.— Go bear this letter to my Lord of Lancaster; this to the prince; this to the Earl of Westmoreland; and this to old Mistress Ursula, whom I have weekly sworn to marry since I perceived the first white hair on my chin. About it: you know where to find me. [*Exit Page.*] A pox of this gout! or, a gout of this pox! for the one or the other plays the rogue with my great toe. 'Tis no matter if I do halt; I have the wars for my color, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable. A good wit will make use of any thing. I will turn diseases to commodity. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *York. A room in the* Archbishop's *palace.*

Enter the Archbishop, *the* Lords HASTINGS, MOWBRAY, *and* BARDOLPH.

Arch. Thus have you heard our cause and know our means;
And, my most noble friends, I pray you all
Speak plainly your opinions of our hopes: —
And first, lord marshal, what say you to it?
Mowb. I well allow th' occasion of our arms;
But gladly would be better satisfied
How, in our means, we should advance ourselves
To look with forehead bold and big enough
Upon the power and puissance of the king.
Hast. Our present musters grow upon the file
To five-and-twenty thousand men of choice;
And our supplies lie largely in the hope
Of great Northumberland, whose bosom burns
With an incensèd fire of injuries.
L. Bard. The question, then, Lord Hastings, standeth thus: —
Whether our present five-and twenty thousand
May hold up head without Northumberland?
Hast. With him, we may.
L. Bard. Ay, marry, there's the point:
But if without him we be thought too feeble,
My judgment is, we should not step too far
Till we had his assistance by the hand;
For, in a theme so bloody-fac'd as this,
Conjecture, expectation, and surmise
Of aids incertain, should not be admitted.
Arch. 'Tis very true, Lord Bardolph; for, indeed,
It was young Hotspur's case at Shrewsbury.
L. Bard. It was, my lord; who lin'd himself with hope,
Eating the air on promise of supply,
Flattering himself with project of a power
Much smaller than the smallest of his thoughts:
And so, with great imagination,
Proper to madmen, led his powers to death,
And, winking, leap'd into destruction.
Hast. But, by your leave, it never yet did hurt
To lay down likelihoods and forms of hope.

L. Bard. Yes, in this present quality of war; —
Indeed, the instant action — a cause on foot —
Lives so in hope, as in an early spring
We see th' appearing buds; which to prove fruit,
Hope gives not so much warrant, as despair
That frosts will bite them. When we mean to build,
We first survey the plot, then draw the model;
And when we see the figure of the house,
Then must we rate the cost of the erection;
Which if we find outweighs ability,
What do we then but draw anew the model
In fewer offices, or at last desist
To build at all? Much more, in this great work —
Which is almost to pluck a kingdom down,
And set another up — should we survey
The plot of situation and the model,
Consent upon a sure foundation,
Question surveyors, know our own estate,
How able such a work to undergo,
To weigh against his opposite; or else
We fortify in paper and in figures,
Using the names of men instead of men:
Like one that draws the model of a house
Beyond his power to build it; who, half through,
Gives o'er, and leaves his part-created cost
A naked subject to the weeping clouds,
And waste for churlish winter's tyranny.

Hast. Grant that our hopes — yet likely of fair birth —
Should be still-born, and that we now possess'd
The utmost man of expectation;
I think we are a body strong enough,
Even as we are, to equal with the king.

L. Bard. What, is the king but five-and-twenty thousand?

Hast. To us no more, nay, not so much, Lord Bardolph.
For his divisions, as the times do brawl,
Are in three heads: one power against the French,
And one against Glendower; perforce a third
Must take up us: so is the unfirm king
In three divided; and his coffers sound
With hollow poverty and emptiness.

Arch. That he should draw his several strengths together,
And come against us in full puissance,
Need not be dreaded.

Hast. If he should do so,
To French and Welsh he leaves his back unarm'd,
They baying him at the heels : never fear that.

L. Bard. Who is it like should lead his forces hither ?

Hast. The Duke of Lancaster and Westmoreland ;
Against the Welsh, himself and Harry Monmouth :
But who is substituted 'gainst the French,
I have no certain notice.

Arch. Let us on,
And publish the occasion of our arms.
The commonwealth is sick of their own choice ;
Their over-geeedy love hath surfeited :
An habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.
O thou fond many ! with what loud applause
Didst thou beat heaven with blessing Bolingbroke,
Before he was what thou wouldst have him be !
And being now trimm'd is thine own desires,
Thou, beastly feeder, art so full of him,
That thou provok'st thyself to cast him up.
So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorge
Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard ;
And now thou wouldst eat thy dead vomit up,
And howl'st to find it. What trust is in these times ?
They that, when Richard liv'd, would have him die,
Are now become enamor'd on his grave :
Thou, that threw'st dust upon his goodly head
When through proud London he came sighing on
After th' admirèd heels of Bolingbroke,
Criest now, "O earth, yield us that king again,
And take thou this !" O thoughts of men accurst !
Past, and to come, seems best ; things present, worst.

Mowb. Shall we go draw our numbers, and set on ?

Hast. We are time's subjects, and time bids be gone.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *London. A street.*

Enter Hostess, FANG *and his* boy *with her, and* SNARE *following.*

Host. Master Fang, have you entered the exion?

Fang. It is entered.

Host. Where's your yeoman? Is't a lusty yeoman? will 'a stand to't?

Fang. Sirrah, where's Snare?

Host. O Lord, ay! good master Snare.

Snare. Here, here.

Fang. Snare, we must arrest Sir John Falstaff.

Host. Yea, good Master Snare; I have entered him and all.

Snare. It may chance cost some of us our lives, for he will stab.

Host. Alas the day! take heed of him; he stabbed me in mine own house, and that most beastly: in good faith, 'a cares not what mischief he doth, if his weapon be out: he will foin like any devil; he will spare neither man, woman, nor child.

Fang. If I can close with him, I care not for his thrust.

Host. No, nor I neither: I'll be at your elbow.

Fang. An I but fist him once; an 'a come but within my vice,—

Host. I am undone by his going; I warrant you, he's an infinitive thing upon my score:—good Master Fang, hold him sure;—good Master Snare, let him not scape. 'A comes continuantly to Pie-corner—saving your manhoods—to buy a saddle; and he is indited to dinner to the Lubber's-head in Lumbert-street, to Master Smooth's the silkman: I pray ye, since my exion is entered, and my case so openly known to the world, let him be brought in to his answer. A hundred mark is a long one for a poor lone woman to bear: and I have borne, and borne, and borne; and have been fubbed off, and fubbed off, and fubbed off, from this day to that day, that it is a shame to be thought on. There is no honesty in such dealing; unless a woman should be made an ass and a beast, to

bear every knave's wrong.— Yonder he comes; and that arrant malmsey-nose knave Bardolph with him. Do your offices, do your offices, Master Fang and Master Snare; do me, do me, do me your offices.

Enter FALSTAFF, Page, *and* BARDOLPH.

Fal. How now! whose mare's dead? what's the matter?

Fang. Sir John, I arrest you at the suit of Mistress Quickly.

Fal. Away, varlets! — Draw, Bardolph: cut me off the villain's head; throw the quean in the channel.

Host. Throw me in the channel! I'll throw thee in the channel. Wilt thou? wilt thou? thou bastardly rogue! — Murder, murder! O thou honey-suckle villain! wilt thou kill God's officers and the king's? O thou honey-seed rogue! thou art a honey-seed, a man-queller, and a woman-queller.

Fal. Keep them off, Bardolph.

Fang. A rescue! a rescue!

Host. Good people, bring a rescue or two.— Thou wo't wo't thou? thou wo't, wo't ta? do, do, thou rogue! do, thou hemp-seed!

Fal. Away, you scullion! you rampallion! you fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe.

Enter the Lord Chief Justice, *attended.*

Ch. Just. What is the matter? keep the peace here, ho!

Host. Good my lord, be good to me! I beseech you, stand to me!

Ch. Just. How now, Sir John! what are you brawling here?
Doth this become your place, your time, and business?
You should have been well on your way to York.—
Stand from him, fellow: wherefore hang'st upon him?

Host. O my most worshipful lord, an't please your grace, I am a poor widow of Eastcheap, and he is arrested at my suit.

Ch. Just. For what sum?

Host. It is more than for some, my lord; it is for all,— all I have. He hath eaten me out of house and home; he hath put all my substance into that fat belly of his:—

but I will have some of it out again, or I will ride thee o' nights like the mare.

Fal. I think I am as like to ride the mare, if I have any vantage of ground to get up.

Ch. Just. How comes this, Sir John? Fie! what man of good temper would endure this tempest of exclamation? Are you not ashamed to enforce a poor widow to so rough a course to come by her own?

Fal. What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

Host. Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and the money too. Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Wheeson-week, when the prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor,— thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people; saying that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath: deny it, if thou canst.

Fal. My lord, this is a poor mad soul; and she says, up and down the town, that her eldest son is like you: she hath been in good case, and the truth is, poverty hath distracted her. But for these foolish officers, I beseech you I may have redress against them.

Ch. Just. Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted with your manner of wrenching the true cause the false way. It is not a confident brow nor the throng of words that come with such more than impudent sauciness from you, can thrust me from a level consideration: you have, as it appears to me, practiced upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman, and made her serve your uses both in purse and in person.

Host. Yea, in truth, my lord.

Ch. Just. Prithee, peace.— Pay her the debt you owe her, and unpay the villainy you have done her: the one you may do with sterling money, and the other with current repentance.

Fal. My lord, I will not undergo this sneap without reply. You call honorable boldness impudent sauciness: if a man will make court'sy, and say nothing, he is virtuous: — no, my lord, my humble duty remembered, I will not be your suitor. I say to you, I do desire deliverance from these officers, being upon hasty employment in the king's affairs.

Ch. Just. You speak as having power to do wrong: but answer in the effect of your reputation, and satisfy the poor woman.

Fal. Come hither, hostess. [*Takes her aside.*

Enter GOWER.

Ch. Just. Now, Master Gower,— what news?

Gow. The king, my lord, and Harry Prince of Wales
Are near at hand: the rest the paper tells.
[*Gives a letter.*

Fal. As I am a gentleman,—

Host. Faith, you said so before.

Fal. As I am a gentleman: — come, no more words of it.

Host. By this heavenly ground I tread on, I must be fain to pawn both my plate and the tapestry of my dining-chambers.

Fal. Glasses, glasses, is the only drinking: and for thy walls,— a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the Prodigal, or the German Hunting in water-work, is worth a thousand of these bed-hangings and these fly-bitten tapestries. Let it be ten pound, if thou canst. Come, an 'twere not for thy humors, there's not a better wench in England. Go, wash thy face, and draw thy action. Come, thou must not be in this humor with me; dost not know me? come, come, I know thou wast set on to this.

Host. Pray thee, Sir John, let it be but twenty nobles: 'i faith I am loth to pawn my plate, so God save me, la.

Fal. Let it alone; I'll make other shift: you'll be a fool still.

Host. Well, you shall have it, though I pawn my

gown. I hope you'll come to supper. You'll pay me all together?

Fal. Will I live? — [*To Bardolph*] Go, with her, with her; hook on, hook on.

Host. Will you have Doll Tearsheet meet you at supper?

Fal. No more words; let's have her.

[*Exeunt Hostess, Bardolph, Officers, and Boy.*

Ch. Just. I have heard better news.

Fal. What's the news, my lord?

Ch. Just. Where lay the king last night?

Gow. At Basingstoke, my lord.

Fal. I hope, my lord, all's well: what is the news, my lord?

Ch. Just. Come all his forces back?

Gow. No; fifteen hundred foot, five hundred horse,
Are march'd up to my Lord of Lancaster,
Against Northumberland and the Archbishop.

Fal. Comes the king back from Wales, my noble lord?

Ch. Just. You shall have letters of me presently:
Come, go along with me, good Master Gower.

Fal. My lord!

Ch. Just. What's the matter?

Fal. Master Gower, shall I entreat you with me to dinner?

Gow. I must wait upon my good lord here,— I thank you, good Sir John.

Ch. Just. Sir John, you loiter here too long, being you are to take soldiers up in counties as you go.

Fal. Will you sup with me, Master Gower?

Ch. Just. What foolish master taught you these manners, Sir John?

Fal. Master Gower, if they become me not, he was a fool that taught them me.— This is the right fencing grace, my lord; tap for tap, and so part fair.

Ch. Just. Now, the Lord lighten thee! thou art a great fool. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. Another street.*

Enter Prince HENRY *and* POINTZ.

P. Hen. Before God, I am exceeding weary

Poin. Is't come to that? I had thought weariness durst not have attached one of so high blood.

P. Hen. Faith, it does me; though it discolors the complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not show vilely in me to desire small beer?

Poin. Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied as to remember so weak a composition.

P. Hen. Belike, then, my appetite was not princely got; for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature, small beer. But, indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name! or to know thy face to-morrow! or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast, viz. these, and those that were thy peach-colored ones! or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity, and one other for use!—but that the tennis-court-keeper knows better than I; for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there; as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of thy low-countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland: and God knows whether those that bawl out of the ruins of thy linen shall inherit his kingdom: but the midwives say the children are not in the fault; whereupon the world increases, and kindreds are mightily strengthened.

Poin. How ill it follows, after you have labored so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is?

P. Hen. Shall I tell thee one thing, Pointz?

Poin. Yes, faith; and let it be an excellent good thing.

P. Hen. It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

Poin. Go to; I stand the push of your one thing that you will tell.

P. Hen. Marry, I tell thee,—it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick: albeit I could tell to thee, —as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend,—I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

Poin. Very hardly upon such a subject.

P. Hen. By this hand, thou thinkest me as far in the devil's book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and per

sistency: let the end try the man. But I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick: and keeping such vile company as thou art hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

Poin. The reason?

P. Hen. What wouldst thou think of me, if I should weep?

Poin. I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

P. Hen. It would be every man's thought; and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks: never a man's thought in the world keeps the road-way better than thine: every man would think me an hypocrite indeed. And what accites your most worshipful thought to think so?

Poin. Why, because you have been so lewd, and so much engraffed to Falstaff.

P. Hen. And to thee.

Poin. By this light, I am well spoke on; I can hear it with mine own ears: the worst that they can say of me is, that I am a second brother, and that I am a proper fellow of my hands; and those two things, I confess, I cannot help.— By the mass, here comes Bardolph.

P. Hen. And the boy that I gave Falstaff: 'a had him from me Christian; and look, if the fat villain have not transformed him ape.

Enter BARDOLPH *and* Page.

Bard. God save your grace!

P. Hen. And yours, most noble Bardolph!

Bard. [*to the Page*] Come, you virtuous ass, you bashful fool, must you be blushing? wherefore blush you now? What a maidenly man-at-arms are you become! Is't such a matter to get a pottle-pot's maidenhead?

Page. He called me even now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window: at last I spied his eyes; and methought he had made two holes in the alewife's new petticoat, and so peeped through.

P. Hen. Hath not the boy profited?

Bard. Away, you whoreson upright rabbit, away!

Page. Away, you rascally Althæa's dream, away!

P. Hen. Instruct us, boy; what dream, boy?

Page. Marry, my lord, Althæa dreamed she was delivered of a firebrand; and therefore I call him her dream.

P. Hen. A crown's worth of good interpretation:— there 'tis, boy. [*Gives money.*

Poin. O that this good blossom could be kept from cankers!— Well, there is sixpence to preserve thee. [*Gives money.*

Bard. An you do not make him be hanged among you, the gallows shall have wrong.

P. Hen. And how doth thy master, Bardolph?

Bard. Well, my lord. He heard of your grace's coming to town: there's a letter for you. [*Gives a letter.*

Poin. Delivered with good respect.— And how doth the martlemas, your master?

Bard. In bodily health, sir.

Poin. Marry, the immortal part needs a physician; but that moves not him: though that be sick, it dies not.

P. Hen. I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as my dog: and he holds his place; for look you how he writes. [*Gives the letter to Pointz.*

Poin. [*reads*] "John Falstaff, knight,"— every man must know that, as oft as he has occasion to name himself: even like those that are kin to king; for they never prick their finger but they say, "There's some of the king's blood spilt." "How comes that?" says he, that takes upon him not to conceive. The answer is as ready as a borrower's cap, "I am the king's poor cousin, sir."

P. Hen. Nay, they will be kin to us, or they will fetch it from Japhet. But to the letter:—

Poin. [*reads*] "Sir John Falstaff, knight, to the son of the king, nearest his father, Harry Prince of Wales, greeting."— Why, this is a certificate.

P. Hen. Peace.

Poin. [*reads*] "I will imitate the honorable Roman in brevity:"— sure he means brevity in breath, short-winded. — "I commend me to thee, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar with Pointz; for he misuses thy favors so much, that he swears thou art to marry his sister Nell. Repent at idle times as thou mayst; and so, farewell.

> "Thine, by yea and no (which is as much as to say, as thou usest him), JACK FALSTAFF with my familiars, JOHN with my brothers and sisters, and SIR JOHN with all Europe."

My lord, I'll steep this letter in sack, and make him eat it.

P. Hen. That's to make him eat twenty of his words. But do you use me thus, Ned? must I marry your sister?

Poin. God send the wench no worse fortune! but I never said so.

P. Hen. Well, thus we play the fools with the time; and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us. — Is your master here in London?

Bard. Yes, my lord.

P. Hen. Where sups he? doth the old boar feed in the old frank?

Bard. At the old place, my lord,— in Eastcheap.

P. Hen. What company?

Page. Ephesians, my lord,— of the old church.

P. Hen. Sup any women with him?

Page. None, my lord, but old Mistress Quickly and Mistress Doll Tearsheet.

P. Hen. What pagan may that be?

Page. A proper gentlewoman, sir, and a kinswoman of my master's.

P. Hen. Even such kin as the parish heifers are to the town bull.— Shall we steal upon them, Ned, at supper?

Poin. I am your shadow, my lord; I'll follow you.

P. Hen. Sirrah, you boy,— and Bardolph,— no word to your master that I am yet come to town: there's for your silence. [*Gives money.*

Bard. I have no tongue, sir.

Page. And for mine, sir, — I will govern it.

P. Hen. Fare ye well; go. [*Exeunt Bardolph and Page.*

— This Doll Tearsheet should be some road.

Poin. I warrant you, as common as the way between Saint Alban's and London.

P. Hen. How might we see Falstaff bestow himself to-night in his true colors, and not ourselves be seen?

Poin. Put on two leathern jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

P. Hen. From a god to a bull? a heavy descension! it was Jove's case. From a prince to a prentice? a low transformation! that shall be mine; for in every thing the purpose must weigh with the folly. Follow me, Ned.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Warkworth. Before the castle.*

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND, Lady NORTHUMBERLAND, *and* Lady PERCY.

North. I pray thee, loving wife, and gentle daughter,
Give even way unto my rough affairs:
Put not you on the visage of the times,
And be, like them, to Percy troublesome.

Lady N. I have given over, I will speak no more:
Do what you will; your wisdom be your guide.

North. Alas, sweet wife, my honor is at pawn;
And, but my going, nothing can redeem it.

Lady P. O, yet, for God's sake, go not to these wars!
The time was, father, that you broke your word,
When you were more endear'd to it than now;
When your own Percy, when my heart's dear Harry,
Threw many a northward look to see his father
Bring up his powers; but he did long in vain.
Who then persuaded you to stay at home?
There were two honors lost,— yours and your son's.
For yours,— may heavenly glory brighten it!
For his,— it stuck upon him, as the sun
In the gray vault of heaven; and by his light
Did all the chivalry of England move
To do brave acts: he was, indeed, the glass
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves:
He had no legs that practic'd not his gait;
And speaking thick, which nature made his blemish,
Became the accents of the valiant;
For those that could speak low and tardily
Would turn their own perfection to abuse,
To seem like him: so that in speech, in gait,
In diet, in affections of delight,

In military rules, humors of blood,
He was the mark and glass, copy and book,
That fashion'd others. And him,— O wondrous him!
O miracle of men! — him did you leave —
Second to none, unseconded by you —
To look upon the hideous god of war
In disadvantage; to abide a field
Where nothing but the sound of Hotspur's name
Did seem defensible: — so you left him.
Never, O never, do his ghost the wrong
To hold your honor more precise and nice
With others than with him! let them alone:
The marshal and the árchbishop are strong:
Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,
To-day might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,
Have talk'd of Monmouth's grave.

North. Beshrew your heart,
Fair daughter, you do draw my spirits from me
With new lamenting ancient oversights.
But I must go, and meet with danger there;
Or it will seek me in another place,
And find me worse provided.

Lady N. O, fly to Scotland,
Till that the nobles and the armèd commons
Have of their puissance made a little taste.

Lady P. If they get ground and vantage of the king,
Then join you with them, like a rib of steel,
To make strength stronger; but, for all our loves,
First let them try themselves. So did your son;
He was so suffer'd: so came I a widow;
And never shall have length of life enough
To rain upon remembrance with mine eyes,
That it may grow and sprout as high as heaven,
For recordation to my noble husband.

North. Come, come, go in with me. 'Tis with my mind
As with the tide swell'd up unto his height,
That makes a still-stand, running neither way:
Fain would I go to meet the árchbishop,
But many thousand reasons hold me back.
I will resolve for Scotland: there am I,
Till time and vantage crave my company. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *London. A room in the Boar's-head Tavern in Eastcheap.*

Enter two Drawers.

First Draw. What the devil hast thou brought there? apple-Johns? thou knowest Sir John cannot endure an apple-John.

Sec. Draw. Mass, thou sayest true. The prince once set a dish of apple-Johns before him, and told him there were five more Sir Johns; and, putting off his hat, said, "I will now take my leave of these six dry, round, old, withered knights." It angered him to the heart: but he hath forgot that.

First Draw. Why, then, cover, and set them down: and see if thou canst find out Sneak's noise; Mistress Tearsheet would fain hear some music. Dispatch: — the room where they supped is too hot; they'll come in straight.

Sec. Draw. Sirrah, here will be the prince and Master Pointz anon; and they will put on two of our jerkins and aprons; and Sir John must not know of it: Bardolph hath brought word.

First Draw. By the mass, here will be old utis: it will be an excellent stratagem.

Sec. Draw. I'll see if I can find out Sneak. [*Exit.*

Enter Hostess *and* DOLL TEARSHEET.

Host. I' faith, sweetheart, methinks now you are in an excellent good temperality: your pulsidge beats as extraordinarily as heart would desire; and your color, I warrant you, is as red as any rose, in good truth, la: but, i' faith, you have drunk too much canaries; and that's a marvelous searching wine, and it perfumes the blood ere one can say "What's this?" — How do you now?

Dol. Better than I was: — hem.

Host. Why, that's well said; a good heart's worth gold.— Lo, here comes Sir John.

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. [*singing*] When Arthur first in court — Empty the jordan. [*Exit First Drawer.*] — [*singing*] And was a worthy king.— How now, Mistress Doll!

Host. Sick of a calm; yea, good faith.

Fal. So is all her sect; an they be once in a calm, they are sick.

Dol. You muddy rascal, is that all the comfort you give me?

Fal. You make fat rascals, Mistress Doll.

Dol. I make them! gluttony and diseases make them; I make them not.

Fal. If the cook help to make the gluttony, you help to make the diseases, Doll: we catch of you, Doll, we catch of you; grant that, my pure virtue, grant that.

Dol. Ay, marry,—our chains and our jewels.

Fal. "Your brooches, pearls, and ouches:"—for to serve bravely is to come halting off, you know: to come off the breach with his pike bent bravely, and to surgery bravely; to venture upon the charged chambers bravely,—

Dol. Hang yourself, you muddy conger, hang yourself!

Host. By my troth, this is the old fashion; you two never meet but you fall to some discord: you are both, in good truth, as rheumatic as two dry toasts; you cannot one bear with another's confirmities. What the good-year! one must bear, and that must be you [*To Doll*]: you are the weaker vessel, as they say, the emptier vessel.

Dol. Can a weak empty vessel bear such a huge full hogshead? there's a whole merchant's venture of Bordeaux stuff in him; you have not seen a hulk better stuffed in the hold.—Come, I'll be friends with thee, Jack; thou art going to the wars; and whether I shall ever see thee again or no, there is nobody cares.

Re-enter First Drawer.

First Draw. Sir, Ancient Pistol's below, and would speak with you.

Dol. Hang him, swaggering rascal! let him not come hither: it is the foul-mouth'dst rogue in England.

Host. If he swagger, let him not come here: no, by my faith; I must live among my neighbors; I'll no swaggerers: I am in good name and fame with the very best:—shut the door;—there comes no swaggerers

here: I have not lived all this while, to have swaggering now: — shut the door, I pray you.

Fal. Dost thou hear, hostess? —

Host. Pray you, pacify yourself, Sir John: there comes no swaggerers here.

Fal. Dost thou hear? it is mine ancient.

Host. Tilly-fally, Sir John, ne'er tell me: your ancient swaggerer comes not in my doors. I was before Master Tisick, the deputy, t' other day; and, as he said to me,— 'twas no longer ago than Wednesday last,— "Neighbor Quickly," says he; — Master Dumb, our minister, was by then; — "Neighbor Quickly," says he, "receive those that are civil; for," saith he, "you are in an ill name:" — now 'a said so, I can tell whereupon; "for," says he, "you are an honest woman, and well thought on; therefore take heed what guests you receive: receive," says he, "no swaggering companions." — There comes none here: — you would bless you to hear what he said: — no, I'll no swaggerers.

Fal. He's no swaggerer, hostess; a tame cheater, i' faith; you may stroke him as gently as a puppy greyhound: he'll not swagger with a Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back in any show of resistance.— Call him up, drawer.

[*Exit First Drawer.*

Host. Cheater, call you him? I will bar no honest man my house, nor no cheater: but I do not love swaggering; by my troth, I am the worse when one says "swagger:" feel, masters, how I shake; look you, I warrant you.

Dol. So you do, hostess.

Host. Do I? yea, in very truth, do I, an 'twere an aspenleaf: I cannot abide swaggerers.

Enter PISTOL, BARDOLPH, *and* Page.

Pist. God save you, Sir John!

Fal. Welcome, Ancient Pistol. Here, Pistol, I charge you with a cup of sack: do you discharge upon mine hostess.

Pist. I will discharge upon her, Sir John, with two bullets.

Fal. She is pistol-proof, sir; you shall hardly offend her.

Host. Come, I'll drink no proofs nor no bullets: I'll drink no more than will do me good, for no man's pleasure, I.

Pist. Then to you, Mistress Dorothy; I will charge you.

Dol. Charge me! I scorn you, scurvy companion. What! you poor, base, rascally, cheating, lack-linen mate! Away, you moldy rogue, away! I am meat for your master.

Pist. I know you, Mistress Dorothy.

Dol. Away, you cut-purse rascal! you filthy bung, away! by this wine, I'll thrust my knife in your moldy chaps, an you play the saucy cuttle with me. Away, you bottle-ale rascal! you basket-hilt stale juggler, you! — Since when, I pray you, sir? — God's light, with two points on your shoulder? much!

Pist. God let me not live, but I will murder your ruff for this.

Fal. No more, Pistol; I would not have you go off here: discharge yourself of our company, Pistol.

Host. No, good Captain Pistol; not here, sweet captain.

Dol. Captain! thou abominable damned cheater, art thou not ashamed to be called captain? An captains were of my mind, they would truncheon you out, for taking their names upon you before you have earned them. You a captain! you slave, for what? for tearing a poor whore's ruff in a bawdy-house? — He a captain! hang him, rogue! he lives upon moldy stewed prunes and dried cakes. A captain! God's light, these villains will make the word as odious as the word "occupy;" which was an excellent good word before it was ill sorted: therefore captains had need look to't.

Bard. Pray thee, go down, good ancient.

Fal. Hark thee hither, Mistress Doll.

Pist. Not I: I tell thee what, Corporal Bardolph, — I could tear her: — I'll be revenged of her.

Page. Pray thee, go down.

Pist. I'll see her damned first; — to Pluto's damned lake, by this hand, to the infernal deep, with Erebus and tortures vile also. Hold hook and line, say I. Down, down, dogs! down, faitors! Have we not Hiren here?

Host. Good Captain Peesel, be quiet; 'tis very late, i' faith: I beseek you now, aggravate your choler.

Pist. These be good humors, indeed! Shall pack-horses,
And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,
Which cannot go but thirty miles a-day,
Compare with Cæsars, and with Cannibals,
And Trojan Greeks? nay, rather damn them with
King Cerberus; and let the welkin roar.
Shall we fall foul for toys?

Host. By my troth, captain, these are very bitter words.

Bard. Be gone, good ancient: this will grow to a brawl anon.

Pist. Die men like dogs! give crowns like pins! Have we not Hiren here?

Host. O' my word, captain, there's none such here. What the good-year! do you think I would deny her? For God's sake, be quiet.

Pist. Then feed, and be fat, my fair Calipolis.
Come, give's some sack.
Se fortuna mi tormenta, lo sperare mi contenta.—
Fear we broadsides? no, let the fiend give fire:
Give me some sack: — and, sweetheart, lie thou there.
[*Laying down his sword.*
Come we to full points here, and are *et-ceteras* nothing?

Fal. Pistol, I would be quiet.

Pist. Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif: what! we have seen the seven stars.

Dol. For God's sake, thrust him down stairs: I cannot endure such a fustian rascal.

Pist. Thrust him down stairs! know we not Galloway nags?

Fal. Quoit him down, Bardolph, like a shove-groat shilling: nay, and 'a do nothing but speak nothing, 'a shall be nothing here.

Bard. Come, get you down stairs.

Pist. What! shall we have incision? shall we imbrue? — [*Snatching up his sword.*
Then death rock me asleep, abridge my doleful days!
Why, then, let grievous, ghastly, gaping wounds
Untwine the Sisters Three! Come, Atropos, I say!

Host. Here's goodly stuff toward!

Fal. Give me my rapier, boy.

Dol. I pray thee, Jack, I pray thee, do not draw.

Fal. Get you down stairs.

[*Drawing, and driving Pistol out.*

Host. Here's a goodly tumult! I'll forswear keeping house, afore I'll be in these tirrits and frights. So; murder, I warrant now.— Alas, alas! put up your naked weapons, put up your naked weapons.

[*Exeunt Pistol and Bardolph.*

Dol. I pray thee, Jack, be quiet; the rascal's gone. Ah, you whoreson little valiant villain, you!

Host. Are you not hurt i' the groin? methought 'a made a shrewd thrust at your belly.

Re-enter BARDOLPH.

Fal. Have you turned him out o' doors?

Bard. Yes, sir. The rascal's drunk; you have hurt him, sir, i' the shoulder.

Fal. A rascal! to brave me!

Dol. Ah, you sweet little rogue, you! Alas, poor ape, how thou sweatest! come, let me wipe thy face;— come on, you whoreson chops:— ah, rogue! i' faith, I love thee: thou art as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth five of Agamemnon, and ten times better than the Nine Worthies: ah, villain!

Fal. A rascally slave! I will toss the rogue in a blanket.

Dol. Do, an thou darest for thy heart: an thou dost, I'll canvass thee between a pair of sheets.

Enter Musicians.

Page. The music is come, sir.

Fal. Let them play:— play, sirs.— Sit on my knee, Doll. [*Music.*] A rascal bragging slave! the rogue fled from me like quicksilver.

Dol. I' faith, and thou followedst him like a church. Thou whoreson little tidy Bartholomew boar-pig, when wilt thou leave fighting o' days and foining o' nights, and begin to patch up thine old body for heaven?

Enter, behind, Prince HENRY *and* POINTZ *disguised as drawers.*

Fal. Peace; good Doll! do not speak like a death's-head; do not bid me remember mine end.

Dol. Sirrah, what humor's the prince of?

Fal. A good shallow young fellow: 'a would have made a good pantler, 'a would ha' chipped bread well.

Dol. They say Pointz has a good wit.

Fal. He a good wit? hang him, baboon! his wit's as thick as Tewksbury mustard; there's no more conceit in him than is in a mallet.

Dol. Why does the prince love him so, then?

Fal. Because their legs are both of a bigness; and 'a plays at quoits well; and eats conger and fennel; and drinks of candles' ends for flap-dragons; and rides the wild-mare with the boys; and jumps upon joint-stools; and swears with a good grace; and wears his boot very smooth, like unto the sign of the leg; and breeds no bate with telling of discreet stories; and such other gambol faculties 'a has, that show a weak mind and an able body, for the which the prince admits him: for the prince himself is such another; the weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois.

P. Hen. Would not this nave of a wheel have his ears cut off?

Poin. Let's beat him before his whore.

P. Hen. Look, whether the withered elder hath not his poll clawed like a parrot.

Poin. Is it not strange that desire should so many years outlive performance?

Fal. Kiss me, Doll.

P. Hen. Saturn and Venus this year in conjunction! what says the almanac to that?

Poin. And, look, whether the fiery Trigon, his man, be not lisping to his master's old tables, his note-book, his counsel-keeper.

Fal. Thou dost give me flattering busses.

Dol. By my troth, I kiss thee with a most constant heart.

Fal. I am old, I am old.

Dol. I love thee better than I love e'er a scurvy young boy of them all.

Fal. What stuff wilt have a kirtle of? I shall receive money o' Thursday: shalt have a cap to-morrow. A merry song, come: it grows late; we'll to bed. Thou'lt forget me when I am gone.

Dol. By my troth, thou'lt set me a-weeping, and thou

sayest so: prove that ever I dress myself handsome till thy return: — well, hearken the end.

Fal. Some sack, Francis.

P. Hen. } Anon, anon, sir. [*Advancing.*
Poin. }

Fal. Ha! a bastard son of the king's? — And art not thou Pointz his brother?

P. Hen. Why, thou globe of sinful continents, what a life dost thou lead!

Fal. A better than thou: I am a gentleman; thou art a drawer.

P. Hen. Very true, sir; and I come to draw you out by the ears.

Host. O, the Lord perserve thy good grace! by my troth, welcome to London. Now, the Lord bless that sweet face of thine! O Jesu, are you come from Wales?

Fal. Thou whoreson mad compound of majesty,— by this light flesh and corrupt blood, thou art welcome.

[*Leaning his hand upon Doll.*

Dol. How, you fat fool! I scorn you.

Poin. My lord, he will drive you out of your revenge, and turn all to a merriment, if you take not the heat.

P. Hen. You whoreson candle-mine, you, how vilely did you speak of me even now before this honest, virtuous, civil gentlewoman!

Host. God's blessing of your good heart! and so she is, by my troth.

Fal. Didst thou hear me?

P. Hen. Yes; and you knew me, as you did when you ran away by Gadshill: you knew I was at your back, and spoke it on purpose to try my patience.

Fal. No, no, no; not so; I did not think thou wast within hearing.

P. Hen. I shall drive you, then, to confess the willful abuse; and then I know how to handle you.

Fal. No abuse, Hal, o' mine honor; no abuse.

P. Hen. Not,— to dispraise me, and call me pantler, and bread-chipper, and I know not what!

Fal. No abuse, Hal.

Poin. No abuse!

Fal. No abuse, Ned, i' the world; honest Ned, none. I dispraised him before the wicked, that the wicked might

not fall in love with him; — in which doing, I have done the part of a careful friend and a true subject, and thy father is to give me thanks for it. No abuse, Hal; — none, Ned, none; — no, faith, boys, none.

P. Hen. See now, whether pure fear and entire cowardice doth not make thee wrong this virtuous gentlewoman to close with us? is she of the wicked? is thine hostess here of the wicked? or is thy boy of the wicked? or honest Bardolph, whose zeal burns in his nose, of the wicked?

Poin. Answer, thou dead elm, answer.

Fal. The fiend hath pricked down Bardolph irrecoverable; and his face is Lucifer's privy-kitchen, where he doth nothing but roast malt-worms. For the boy, — there is a good angel about him; but the devil outbids him too.

P. Hen. For the women?

Fal. For one of them, — she is in hell already, and burns, poor soul! For the other, — I owe her money; and whether she be damned for that, I know not.

Host. No, I warrant you.

Fal. No, I think thou art not; I think thou art quit for that. Marry, there is another indictment upon thee, for suffering flesh to be eaten in thy house, contrary to the law; for the which I think thou wilt howl.

Host. All victualers do so: what's a joint of mutton or two in a whole Lent?

P. Hen. You, gentlewoman, —

Dol. What says your grace?

Fal. His grace says that which his flesh rebels against. [*Knocking within.*

Host. Who knocks so loud at door? — Look to the door there, Francis.

Enter PETO.

P. Hen. Peto, how now? what news?

Peto. The king your father is at Westminster;
And there are twenty weak and wearied posts
Come from the north: and, as I came along,
I met and overtook a dozen captains,
Bare-headed, sweating, knocking at the taverns,
And asking every one for Sir John Falstaff.

P. Hen. By heaven, Pointz, I feel me much to blame,
So idly to profane the precious time;

When tempest of commotion, like the south,
Borne with black vapor, doth begin to melt,
And drop upon our bare unarmèd heads.
Give me my sword and cloak.— Falstaff, good night.

[*Exeunt Prince Henry, Pointz, Peto, and Bardolph.*

Fal. Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the night, and we must hence, and leave it unpicked.

[*Knocking within.*

More knocking at the door!

Re-enter BARDOLPH.

How now! what's the matter?

Bard. You must away to court, sir, presently;
A dozen captains stay at door for you.

Fal. [*to the Page*] Pay the musicians, sirrah.— Farewell, hostess;— farewell, Doll.— You see, my good wenches, how men of merit are sought after: the undeserver may sleep, when the man of action is called on. Farewell, good wenches: if I be not sent away post, I will see you again ere I go.

Dol. I cannot speak;— if my heart be not ready to burst,— well, sweet Jack, have a care of thyself.

Fal. Farewell, farewell.

[*Exeunt Falstaff and Bardolph.*

Host. Well, fare thee well: I have known thee these twenty-nine years, come peascod-time; but an honester and truer-hearted man,— well, fare thee well.

Bard. [*within*] Mistress Tearsheet!

Host. What's the matter?

Bard. [*within*] Bid Mistress Tearsheet come to my master.

Host. O, run, Doll, run; run, good Doll: come [*Doll comes blubbered*]; yea, will you come, Doll? [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Westminster. A room in the palace.*

Enter King HENRY *in his nightgown, with a* Page.

K. Hen. Go call the Earls of Surrey and of Warwick;
But, ere they come, bid them o'er-read these letters,
And well consider of them: make good speed.

[*Exit Page.*

How many thousand of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour asleep! — O sleep, O gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
Than in the pérfum'd chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody?
O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile
In loathsome beds, and leav'st the kingly couch
A watch-case or a common 'larum-bell?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deafening clamor in the slippery shrouds,
That, with the hurly, death itself awakes? —
Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down!
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

Enter WARWICK *and* SURREY.

War. Many good morrows to your majesty!
K. Hen. Is it good morrow, lords?
War. 'Tis one o'clock, and past.
K. Hen. Why, then, good morrow to you all, my lords.
Have you read o'er the letters that I sent you?
War. We have, my liege.
K. Hen. Then you perceive the body of our kingdom
How foul it is; what rank diseases grow,
And with what danger, near the heart of it.
War. It is but as a body yet distemper'd;
Which to his former strength may be restor'd

With good advice and little medicine:
My Lord Northumberland will soon be cool'd.
K. Hen. O God, that one might read the book of fate,
And see the revolution of the times,
Make mountains level, and the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea! and, other times, to see
The beachy girdle of the ocean
Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chances mock,
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth,— viewing his progress through,
What perils past, what crosses to ensue,—
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.
'Tis not ten years gone
Since Richard and Northumberland, great friends,
Did feast together, and in two years after
Were they at wars: it is but eight years since
This Percy was the man nearest my soul;
Who like a brother toil'd in my affairs,
And laid his love and life under my foot;
Yea, for my sake, even to the eyes of Richard
Gave him defiance. But which of you was by —
[*To Warwick.*] You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember —
When Richard,— with his eye brimful of tears,
Then check'd and rated by Northumberland,—
Did speak these words, now prov'd a prophecy?
"Northumberland, thou ladder by the which
My cousin Bolingbroke ascends my throne,"—
Though then, God knows, I had no such intent,
But that necessity so bow'd the state,
That I and greatness were compell'd to kiss: —
"The time will come," thus did he follow it,
"The time will come, that foul sin, gathering head.
Shall break into corruption:"— so went on,
Foretelling this same time's condition,
And the division of our amity.
War. There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceas'd;
The which observ'd, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things

As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasurèd.
Such things become the hatch and brood of time;
And, by the necessary form of this,
King Richard might create a perfect guess,
That great Northumberland, then false to him,
Would of that seed grow to a greater falseness;
Which should not find a ground to root upon,
Unless on you.

K. Hen. Are these things, then, necessities?
Then let us meet them like necessities; —
And that same word even now cries out on us:
They say the bishop and Northumberland
Are fifty thousand strong.

War. It cannot be, my lord;
Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo,
The numbers of the fear'd. Please it your grace
To go to bed. Upon my soul, my lord,
The powers that you already have sent forth
Shall bring this prize in very easily.
To comfort you the more, I have receiv'd
A certain instance that Glendower is dead.
Your majesty hath been this fortnight ill;
And these unseason'd hours perforce must add
Unto your sickness.

K. Hen. I will take your counsel:
And were these inward wars once out of hand,
We would, dear lords, unto the Holy Land. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Court before* Justice SHALLOW'S *house in Gloucestershire.*

Enter SHALLOW *and* SILENCE, *meeting;* MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, BULLCALF, *and* Servants, *behind.*

Shal. Come on, come on, come on, sir; give me your hand, sir, give me your hand, sir: an early stirrer, by the rood. And how doth my good cousin Silence?

Sil. Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

Shal. And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow? and your fairest daughter and mine, my god-daughter Ellen?

Sil. Alas, a black ousel, cousin Shallow!

Shal. By yea and nay, sir, I dare say my cousin William is become a good scholar: he is at Oxford still, is he not?

Sil. Indeed, sir, to my cost.

Shal. 'A must, then, to the inns o' court shortly: I was once of Clement's-inn, where I think they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

Sil. You were called "lusty Shallow" then, cousin.

Shal. By the mass, I was called any thing; and I would have done any thing indeed too, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Bare, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele a cotsol' man,— you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the inns o' court again: and, I may say to you, we knew where the bona-robas were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk.

Sil. This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers?

Shal. The same Sir John, the very same. I saw him break Skogan's head at the court-gate, when 'a was a crack not thus high: and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's-inn. Jesu, Jesu, the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of my old acquaintance are dead!

Sil. We shall all follow, cousin.

Shal. Certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure: death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all: all shall die.— How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

Sil. Truly, cousin, I was not there.

Shal. Death is certain.— Is old Double of your town living yet?

Sil. Dead, sir.

Shal. Jesu, Jesu, dead!—'a drew a good bow;—and dead!—'a shot a fine shoot:— John o' Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead!—'a would have clapped i' the clout at twelve score; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done 'a man's heart good to see.— How a score of ewes now?

Sil. Thereafter as they be: a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

Shal. And is old Double dead?

Sil. Here come two of Sir John Falstaff's men, as I think.

Enter BARDOLPH, *and one with him.*

Bard. Good morrow, honest gentlemen: I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow?

Shal. I am Robert Shallow, sir; a poor esquire of this county, and one of the king's justices of the peace: what is your good pleasure with me?

Bard. My captain, sir, commends him to you; my captain, Sir John Falstaff,— a tall gentleman, by heaven, and a most gallant leader.

Shal. He greets me well, sir. I knew him a good backsword man. How doth the good knight? may I ask how my lady his wife doth?

Bard. Sir, pardon; a soldier is better accommodated than with a wife.

Shal. It is well said, in faith, sir; and it is well said indeed too. Better accommodated! — it is good; yea, indeed, is it: good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable. Accommodated! — it comes of *accommodo:* very good; a good phrase.

Bard. Pardon, sir; I have heard the word. Phrase call you it? by this good day, I know not the phrase; but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldier-like word, and a word of exceeding good command, by heaven. Accommodated; that is, when a man is, as they say, accommodated; or when a man is, being, whereby 'a may be thought to be accommodated; which is an excellent thing.

Shal. It is very just.— Look, here comes good Sir John.

Enter FALSTAFF.

Give me your good hand, give me your worship's good hand: by my troth, you like well, and bear your years very well: welcome, good Sir John.

Fal. I am glad to see you well, good Master Robert Shallow: — Master Surecard, as I think?

Shal. No, Sir John; it is my cousin Silence, in commission with me.

Fal. Good Master Silence, it well befits you should be of the peace.

Sil. Your good worship is welcome.

Fal. Fie! this is hot weather. — Gentlemen, have you provided me here half a dozen sufficient men?

Shal. Marry, have we, sir. Will you sit?

Fal. Let me see them, I beseech you.

Shal. Where's the roll? where's the roll? where's the roll? — Let me see, let me see, let me see. So, so, so, so: yea, marry, sir: — Ralph Mouldy! — let them appear as I call; let them do so, let them do so.— Let me see; where is Mouldy?

Moul. Here, an't please you.

Shal. What think you, Sir John? a good-limbed fellow; young, strong, and of good friends.

Fal. Is thy name Mouldy?

Moul. Yea, an't please you.

Fal. 'Tis the more time thou wert used.

Shal. Ha, ha, ha! most excellent, i' faith! things that are moldy lack use: very singular good! — in faith, well said, Sir John; very well said.

Fal. [*to Shallow*] Prick him.

Moul. I was pricked well enough before, an you could have let me alone: my old dame will be undone now, for one to do her husbandry and her drudgery: you need not to have pricked me; there are other men fitter to go out than I.

Fal. Go to: peace, Mouldy; you shall go. Mouldy, it is time you were spent.

Moul. Spent!

Shal. Peace, fellow, peace; stand aside: know you where you are? — For the others, Sir John: — let me see; — Simon Shadow!

Fal. Yea, marry, let me have him to sit under: he's like to be a cold soldier.

Shal. Where's Shadow?

Shad. Here, sir.

Fal. Shadow, whose son art thou?

Shad. My mother's son, sir.

Fal. Thy mother's son! like enough; and thy father's

shadow: so the son of the female is the shadow of the male: it is often so, indeed; not much of the father's substance.

Shal. Do you like him, Sir John?

Fal. Shadow will serve for summer,— prick him; for we have a number of shadows to fill up the muster-book.

Shal. Thomas Wart!

Fal. Where's he?

Wart. Here, sir.

Fal. Is thy name Wart?

Wart. Yea, sir.

Fal. Thou art a very ragged wart.

Shal. Shall I prick him, Sir John?

Fal. It were superfluous; for his apparel is built upon his back, and the whole frame stands upon pins: prick him no more.

Shal. Ha, ha, ha!— you can do it, sir; you can do it: I commend you well.— Francis Feeble!

Fee. Here, sir.

Fal. What trade art thou, Feeble?

Fee. A woman's tailor, sir.

Shal. Shall I prick him, sir?

Fal. You may: but if he had been a man's tailor, he'd ha' pricked you.— Wilt thou make as many holes in an enemy's battle as thou hast done in a woman's petticoat?

Fee. I will do my good will, sir; you can have no more.

Fal. Well said, good woman's tailor! well said, courageous Feeble! thou wilt be as valiant as the wrathful dove or most magnanimous mouse.— Prick the woman's tailor well, Master Shallow; deep, Master Shallow.

Fee. I would Wart might have gone, sir.

Fal. I would thou wert a man's tailor, that thou mightst mend him, and make him fit to go. I cannot put him to a private soldier, that is the leader of so many thousands: let that suffice, most forcible Feeble.

Fee. It shall suffice, sir.

Fal. I am bound to thee, reverend Feeble.— Who is next?

Shal. Peter Bullcalf o' the green!

Fal. Yea, marry, let's see Bullcalf.

Bull. Here, sir.

Fal. 'Fore God, a likely fellow! — Come, prick me Bull-calf till he roar again.

Bull. O Lord! good my lord captain,—

Fal. What, dost thou roar before thou art pricked?

Bull. O, Lord, sir! I am a diseased man.

Fal. What disease hast thou?

Bull. A whoreson cold, sir,— a cough, sir,— which I caught with ringing in the king's affairs upon his coronation-day, sir.

Fal. Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown; we will have away thy cold; and I will take such order, that thy friends shall ring for thee.— Is here all?

Shal. Here is two more called than your number; you must have but four here, sir: — and so, I pray you, go in with me to dinner.

Fal. Come, I will drink with you, but I cannot tarry dinner. I am glad to see you, by my troth, Master Shallow.

Shal. O Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's field?

Fal. No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more of that.

Shal. Ha, 'twas a merry night. And is Jane Nightwork alive?

Fal. She lives, Master Shallow.

Shal. She never could away with me.

Fal. Never, never; she would always say she could not abide Master Shallow.

Shal. By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba. Doth she hold her own well?

Fal. Old, old, Master Shallow.

Shal. Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old; certain she's old; and had Robin Nightwork by old Nightwork before I came to Clement's-inn.

Sil. That's fifty-five year ago.

Shal. Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen! — Ha, Sir John, said I well?

Fal. We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

Shal. That we have, that we have, that we have; in faith, Sir John, we have: our watch-word was, "Hem,

boys!" — Come, let's to dinner; come, let s to dinner: — Jesus, the days that we have seen! — come, come.

[*Exeunt Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence.*

Bull. Good Master Corporate Bardolph, stand my friend; and here's four Harry ten shillings in French crowns for you. In very truth, sir, I had as lief be hanged, sir, as go: and yet, for mine own part, sir, I do not care; but rather, because I am unwilling, and, for mine own part, have a desire to stay with my friends; else, sir, I did not care, for mine own part, so much.

Bard. Go to; stand aside.

Moul. And, good master corporal captain, for my old dame's sake, stand my friend: she has nobody to do any thing about her when I am gone; and she is old, and cannot help herself: you shall have forty, sir.

Bard. Go to; stand aside.

Fee. By my troth, I care not; a man can die but once; — we owe God a death; I'll ne'er bear a base mind: an't be my destiny, so; an't be not, so: no man's too good to serve's prince; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next.

Bard. Well said; thou'rt a good fellow.

Fee. Faith, I'll bear no base mind.

Re-enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, *and* SILENCE.

Fal. Come, sir, which men shall I have?

Shal. Four of which you please.

Bard. Sir, a word with you: — I have three pound to free Mouldy and Bullcalf.

Fal. Go to; well.

Shal. Come, Sir John, which four will you have?

Fal. Do you choose for me.

Shal. Marry, then,—Mouldy, Bullcalf, Feeble, and Shadow.

Fal. Mouldy and Bullcalf: — for you, Mouldy, stay at home till you are past service: — and for your part, Bullcalf, grow till you come unto it: — I will none of you.

Shal. Sir John, Sir John, do not yourself wrong: they are your likeliest men, and I would have you served with the best.

Fal. Will you tell me, Master Shallow, how to choose a man? Care I for the limb, the thews, the stature, bulk,

and big assemblance of a man! Give me the spirit, Master Shallow.—Here's Wart;—you see what a ragged appearance it is: 'a shall charge you, and discharge you, with the motion of a pewterer's hammer; come off, and on, swifter than he that gibbets-on the brewer's bucket. And this same half-faced fellow, Shadow,—give me this man: he presents no mark to the enemy,—the foeman may with as great aim level at the edge of a penknife. And, for a retreat,—how swiftly will this Feeble, the woman's tailor, run off! O, give me the spare men, and spare me the great ones.—Put me a caliver into Wart's hand, Bardolph.

Bard. Hold, Wart, traverse; thus, thus, thus.

Fal. Come, manage me your caliver. So:—very well:—go to:—very good:—exceeding good.—O, give me always a little, lean, old, chapped, bald shot.—Well said, i' faith, Wart: thou'rt a good scab: hold, there's a tester for thee.

Shal. He is not his craft's-master; he doth not do it right. I remember at Mile-end Green,—when I lay at Clement's-inn,—I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show,—there was a little quiver fellow, and 'a would manage you his piece thus; and 'a would about and about, and come you in and come you in: "rah, tah, tah," would 'a say; "bounce" would 'a say; and away again would 'a go, and again would 'a come:—I shall ne'er see such a fellow.

Fal. These fellows will do well, Master Shallow.—God keep you, Master Silence: I will not use many words with you.—Fare you well, gentlemen both: I thank you: I must a dozen mile to-night.—Bardolph, give the soldiers coats.

Shal. Sir John, the Lord bless you! God prosper your affairs! God send us peace! As you return, visit my house; let our old acquaintance be renewed: peradventure I will with you to the court.

Fal. 'Fore God, I would you would, Master Shallow.

Shal. Go to; I have spoke at a word. Fare you well.

Fal. Fare you well, gentle gentlemen. [*Exeunt Shallow and Silence.*] On, Bardolph; lead the men away. [*Exeunt Bardolph, Recruits, &c.*] As I return, I will fetch off these justices: I do see the bottom of Justice

Shallow. Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying! This same starved justice hath done nothing but prate to me of the wildness of his youth, and the feats he hath done about Turnbull-street; and every third word a lie, duer paid to the hearer than the Turk's tribute. I do remember him at Clement's-inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring: when 'a was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife; 'a was so forlorn, that his dimensions to any thick sight were invincible: 'a was the very genius of famine; yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him mandrake: 'a came ever in the rearward of the fashion; and sung those tunes to the overscutched huswives that he heard the carmen whistle, and swaré they were his Fancies or his Good-nights. And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire, and talks as familiarly of John o' Gaunt as if he had been sworn brother to him; and I'll be sworn 'a ne'er saw him but once in the Tilt-yard; and then he burst his head for crowding among the marshal's men. I saw it, and told John o' Gaunt he beat his own name; for you might have thrust him and all his apparel into an eel-skin; the case of a treble hautboy was a mansion for him, a court: — and now has he land and beeves. Well, I'll be acquainted with him, if I return; and it shall go hard but I'll make him a philosopher's two stones to me: if the young dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason, in the law of nature, but I may snap at him. Let time shape, and there an end. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Gaultree forest in Yorkshire.*

Enter the Archbishop of York, MOWBRAY, HASTINGS, *and others.*

Arch. What is this forest call'd?

Hast. 'Tis Gaultree Forest, an't shall please your grace.

Arch. Here stand, my lords; and send discoverers forth
To know the numbers of our enemies.

Hast. We have sent forth already.

Arch. 'Tis well done.
My friends and brethren in these great affairs,

I must acquaint you that I have receiv'd
New-dated letters from Northumberland;
Their cold intent, tenor, and substance, thus:—
Here doth he wish his person, with such powers
As might hold sortance with his quality,
The which he could not levy; whereupon
He is retir'd, to ripe his growing fortunes,
To Scotland; and concludes in hearty prayers
That your attempts may overlive the hazard
And fearful meeting of their opposite.

Mowb. Thus do the hopes we have in him touch ground,
And dash themselves to pieces.

Enter a Messenger.

Hast. Now, what news?

Mess. West of this forest, scarcely off a mile,
In goodly form comes on the enemy;
And, by the ground they hide, I judge their number
Upon or near the rate of thirty thousand.

Mowb. The just proportion that we gave them out.
Let us sway on, and face them in the field.

Arch. What well-appointed leader fronts us here?

Mowb. I think it is my Lord of Westmoreland.

Enter WESTMORELAND.

West. Health and fair greeting from our general,
The prince, Lord John and Duke of Lancaster.

Arch. Say on, my Lord of Westmoreland, in peace,
What doth concern your coming.

West. Then, my lord,
Unto your grace do I in chief address
The substance of my speech. If that rebellion
Came like itself, in base and abject routs,
Led on by heady youth, guarded with rags,
And countenanc'd by boys and beggary,—
I say, if damn'd commotion so appear'd,
In his true, native, and most proper shape,
You, reverend father, and these noble lords,
Had not been here, to dress the ugly form
Of bare and bloody insurrection
With your fair honors. You, lord archbishop,—

Whose see is by a civil peace maintain'd;
Whose beard the silver hand of peace hath touch'd;
Whose learning and good letters peace hath tutor'd;
Whose white investments figure innocence,
The dove and very blessèd spirit of peace,—
Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself
Out of the speech of peace, that bears such grace,
Into the harsh and boisterous tongue of war;
Turning your books to greaves, your ink to blood,
Your pens to lances, and your tongue divine
To a loud trumpet and a point of war?

Arch. Wherefore do I this? — so the question stands.
Briefly to this end: — we are all diseas'd;
And with our surfeiting and wanton hours
Have brought ourselves into a burning fever,
And we must bleed for it: of which disease
Our late king, Richard, being infected, died.
But, my most noble Lord of Westmoreland,
I take not on me here as a physician;
Nor do I, as an enemy to peace,
Troop in the throngs of military men;
But, rather, show awhile like fearful war,
To diet rank minds sick of happiness,
And purge th' obstructions which begin to stop
Our very veins of life. Hear me more plainly.
I have in equal balance justly weigh'd
What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,
And find our griefs heavier than our offenses.
We see which way the stream of time doth run,
And are enforc'd from our most quiet sphere
By the rough torrent of occasion;
And have the summary of all our griefs,
When time shall serve, to show in articles;
Which long ere this we offer'd to the king,
And might by no suit gain our audience:
When we are wrong'd, and would unfold our griefs,
We are denied access unto his person
Even by those men that most have done us wrong.
The dangers of the days but newly gone
Whose memory is written on the earth
With yet-appearing blood, and the examples
Of every minute's instance, present now,

Have put us in these ill-beseeming arms;
Not to break peace, or any branch of it,
But to establish here a peace indeed,
Concurring both in name and quality.

West. When ever yet was your appeal denied;
Wherein have you been gallèd by the king;
What peer hath been suborn'd to grate on you;—
That you should seal this lawless bloody book
Of forg'd rebellion with a seal divine,
And consecrate commotion's bitter edge?

Arch. My brother general, the commonwealth,
To brother born an household cruelty,
I make my quarrel in particular.

West. There is no need of any such redress;
Or if there were, it not belongs to you.

Mowb. Why not to him in part, and to us all
That feel the bruises of the days before,
And suffer the condition of these times
To lay a heavy and unequal hand
Upon our honors?

West. O, my good Lord Mowbray,
Construe the times to their necessities,
And you shall say indeed, it is the time,
And not the king, that doth you injuries.
Yet, for your part, it not appears to me,
Either from the king, or in the present time,
That you should have an inch of any ground
To build a grief on: were you not restor'd
To all the Duke of Norfolk's signories,
Your noble and right-well-remember'd father's?

Mowb. What thing, in honor, had my father lost,
That need to be reviv'd and breath'd in me?
The king, that lov'd him, as the state stood then,
Was, force perforce, compell'd to banish him:
And when that Henry Bolingbroke and he —
Being mounted and both rousèd in their seats,
Their neighing coursers daring of the spur,
Their armèd staves in charge, their beavers down,
Their eyes of fire sparkling through sights of steel,
And the loud trumpet blowing them together,—
Then, then, when there was nothing could have stay'd
My father from the breast of Bolingbroke,

O, then the king did throw his warder down:
His own life hung upon the staff he threw:
Then threw he down himself, and all their lives
That by indictment and by dint of sword
Have since miscarried under Bolingbroke.

West. You speak, Lord Mowbray, now you know not what.
The earl of Hereford was reputed then
In England the most valiant gentleman:
Who knows on whom fortune would then have smil'd?
But if your father had been victor there,
He ne'er had borne it out of Coventry:
For all the country, in a general voice,
Cried hate upon him; and all their prayers and love
Were set on Hereford, whom they doted on,
And bless'd and grac'd indeed, more than the king.
But this is mere digression from my purpose.—
Here come I from our princely general
To know your griefs; to tell you from his grace
That he will give you audience; and wherein
It shall appear that your demands are just,
You shall enjoy them,—every thing set off
That might so much as think you enemies.

Mowb. But he hath forc'd us to compel this offer;
And it proceeds from policy, not love.

West. Mowbray, you overween to take it so;
This offer comes from mercy, not from fear:
For, lo! within a ken our army lies;
Upon mine honor, all too confident
To give admittance to a thought of fear:
Our battle is more full of names than yours,
Our men more perfect in the use of arms,
Our armor all as strong, our cause the best;
Then reason wills our hearts should be as good:
Say you not, then, our offer is compell'd.

Mowb. Well, by my will we shall admit no parley.

West. That argues but the shame of your offense:
A rotten case abides no handling.

Hast. Hath the Prince John a full commission,
In very ample virtue of his father,
To hear and absolutely to determine
Of what conditions we shall stand upon?

West. That is intended in the general's name:
I muse you make so slight a question.
Arch. Then take, my lord of Westmoreland, this schedule,
For this contains our general grievances:
Each several article herein redress'd,
All members of our cause, both here and hence,
That are insinew'd to this action,
Acquitted by a true substantial form,
And present execution of our wills
To us and to our purposes confirm'd,—
We come within our awful banks again,
And knit our powers to the arm of peace.
West. This will I show the general. Please you, lords,
In sight of both our battles we may meet;
And either end in peace,—which God so frame!—
Or to the place of difference call the swords
Which must decide it.
Arch. My lord, we will do so.
[*Exit West.*
Mowb. There is a thing within my bosom tells me
That no conditions of our peace can stand.
Hast. Fear you not that: if we can make our peace
Upon such large terms and so absolute
As our conditions shall consist upon,
Our peace shall stand as firm as rocky mountains.
Mowb. Ay, but our valuation shall be such,
That every slight and false-derivèd cause,
Yea, every idle, nice, and wanton reason,
Shall to the king taste of this action;
That, were our royal faiths martyrs in love,
We shall be winnow'd with so rough a wind,
That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff,
And good from bad find no partition.
Arch. No, no, my lord. Note this,—the king is weary
Of dainty and such picking grievances:
For he hath found, to end one doubt by death
Revives two greater in the heirs of life;
And therefore will he wipe his tables clean,
And keep no tell-tale to his memory,
That may repeat and history his loss

To new remembrance: for full well he knows
He cannot so precisely weed this land
As his misdoubts present occasion:
His foes are so enrooted with his friends,
That, plucking to unfix an enemy,
He doth unfasten so and shake a friend.
So that this land, like an offensive wife
That hath enrag'd him on to offer strokes,
As he is striking, holds his infant up,
And hangs resolv'd correction in the arm
That was uprear'd to execution.

Hast. Besides, the king hath wasted all his rods
On late offenders, that he now doth lack
The very instruments of chastisement:
So that his power, like to a fangless lion,
May offer, but not hold.

Arch. 'Tis very true:
And therefore be assur'd, my good lord marshal,
If we do now make our atonement well,
Our peace will, like a broken limb united,
Grow stronger for the breaking.

Mowb. Be it so.
Here is return'd my Lord of Westmoreland.

Re-enter WESTMORELAND.

West. The prince is here at hand: pleaseth your lordship
To meet his grace just distance 'tween our armies.

Mowb. Your grace of York, in God's name, then, set forward.

Arch. Before, and greet his grace: — my lord, we come.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Another part of the forest.*

Enter, from one side, MOWBRAY, *the* Archbishop, HASTINGS, *and others; from the other side,* Prince JOHN of Lancaster, WESTMORELAND, Officers, *and* attendants.

P. John. You're well encounter'd here, my cousin Mowbray: —
Good day to you, gentle lord árchbishop; —

And so to you, Lord Hastings,— And to all.—
My Lord of York, it better show'd with you,
When that your flock, assembled by the bell,
Encircled you to hear with reverence
Your exposition on the holy text,
Than now to see you here an iron man,
Cheering a rout of rebels with your drum,
Turning the word to sword, and life to death.
That man that sits within a monarch's heart,
And ripens in the sunshine of his favor,
Would he abuse the countenance of the king,
Alack, what mischiefs might he set abroach,
In shadow of such greatness! With you, lord bishop,
It is even so. Who hath not heard it spoken,
How deep you were within the books of God?
To us the speaker in his parliament;
To us th' imagin'd voice of God himself,
The very opener and intelligencer
Between the grace, the sanctities of heaven
And our dull workings. O, who shall believe,
But you misuse the reverence of your place,
Employ the countenance and grace of heaven,
As a false favorite doth his prince's name,
In deeds dishonorable? You have ta'en up,
Under the counterfeited seal of God,
The subjects of his substitute, my father,
And both against the peace of heaven and him
Have here up-swarm'd them.

Arch. Good my Lord of Lancaster,
I am not here against your father's peace;
But, as I told my Lord of Westmoreland,
The time misorder'd doth, in common sense,
Crowd us and crush us to this monstrous form,
To hold our safety up. I sent your grace
The parcels and particulars of our grief,—
The which hath been with scorn shov'd from the court,—
Whereon this Hydra son of war is born;
Whose dangerous eyes may well be charm'd asleep
With grant of our most just and right desires,
And true obedience, of this madness cur'd,
Stoop tamely to the foot of majesty.

Mowb. If not, we ready are to try our fortunes
To the last man.
Hast. And though we here fall down,
We have supplies to second our attempt:
If they miscarry, theirs shall second them;
And so success of mischief shall be born,
And heir from heir shall hold this quarrel up,
Whiles England shall have generation.
P. John. You are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow,
To sound the bottom of the after-times.
West. Pleaseth your grace to answer them directly,
How far-forth you do like their articles.
P. John. I like them all, and do allow them well;
And swear here, by the honor of my blood,
My father's purposes have been mistook;
And some about him have too lavishly
Wrested his meaning and authority.—
My lord, these griefs shall be with speed redress'd;
Upon my soul, they shall. If this may please you,
Discharge your powers unto their several counties,
As we will ours: and here, between the armies,
Let's drink together friendly and embrace,
That all their eyes may bear those tokens home
Of our restorèd love and amity.
Arch. I take your princely word for these redresses.
P. John. I give it you, and will maintain my word:
And thereupon I drink unto your grace. [*Drinks.*
Hast. [*to an Officer*] Go, captain, and deliver to the army
This news of peace: let them have pay, and part:
I know it will well please them. Hie thee, captain.
[*Exit Officer.*
Arch. To you, my noble Lord of Westmoreland.
[*Drinks.*
West. I pledge your grace [*Drinks*]; and, if you knew what pains
I have bestow'd to breed this present peace,
You would drink freely: but my love to ye
Shall show itself more openly hereafter.
Arch. I do not doubt you.
West. I am glad of it.—
Health to my lord and gentle cousin, Mowbray. [*Drinks.*

Mowb. You wish me health in very happy season;
For I am, on the sudden, something ill.
Arch. Against ill chances men are ever merry;
But heaviness foreruns the good event.
West. Therefore be merry, coz; since sudden sorrow
Serves to say thus, "Some good thing comes to-morrow."
Arch. Believe me, I am passing light in spirit.
Mowb. So much the worse, if your own rule be true.
[*Shouts within.*
P. John. The word of peace is render'd: hark, how they shout!
Mowb. This had been cheerful after victory.
Arch. A peace is of the nature of a conquest;
For then both parties nobly are subdu'd,
And neither party loser.
P. John. Go, my lord,
And let our army be dischargèd too. [*Exit Westmoreland.*
And, good my lord, so please you, let your trains
March by us, that we may peruse the men
We should have cop'd withal.
Arch. Go, good Lord Hastings,
And, ere they be dismiss'd, let them march by.
[*Exit Hastings.*
P. John. I trust, lords, we shall lie to-night together.

Re-enter WESTMORELAND.

Now, cousin, wherefore stands our army still?
West. The leaders, having charge from you to stand,
Will not go off until they hear you speak.
P. John. They know their duties.

Re-enter HASTINGS.

Hast. My lord, our army is dispers'd already:
Like youthful steers unyok'd, they take their courses
East, west, north, south; or, like a school broke up,
Each hurries toward his home and sporting-place.
West. Good tidings, my Lord Hastings; for the which
I do arrest thee, traitor, of high treason: —
And you, lord árchbishop,— and you, Lord Mowbray,—
Of capital treason I attach you both.
Mowb. Is this proceeding just and honorable?
West. Is your assembly so?

Arch. Will you thus break your faith?
P. John. I pawn'd thee none:
I promis'd you redress of these same grievances
Whereof you did complain; which, by mine honor,
I will perform with a most Christian care.
But for you, rebels,— look to taste the due
Meet for rebellion and such acts as yours.
Most shallowly did you these arms commence,
Fondly brought here, and foolishly sent hence.—
Strike up our drums, pursue the scatter'd stray:
God, and not we, hath safely fought to-day.—
Some guard these traitors to the block of death,
Treason's true bed and yielder-up of breath.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another part of the forest.*

Alarums: excursions. Enter FALSTAFF *and* COLEVILE, *meeting.*

Fal. What's your name, sir? of what condition are you, and of what place, I pray?

Cole. I am a knight, sir; and my name is Colevile of the dale.

Fal. Well, then, Colevile is your name, a knight is your degree, and your place the dale: Colevile shall be still your name, a traitor your degree, and the dungeon your place,— a dale deep enough; so shall you be still Colevile of the dale.

Cole. Are not you Sir John Falstaff?

Fal. As good a man as he, sir, whoe'er I am. Do ye yield, sir? or shall I sweat for you? If I do sweat, they are the drops of thy lovers, and they weep for thy death: therefore rouse up fear and trembling, and do observance to my mercy.

Cole. I think you are Sir John Falstaff; and in that thought yield me.

Fal. I have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine; and not a tongue of them all speaks any other word but my name. An I had but a belly of any indifferency, I were simply the most active fellow in Europe: my womb, my womb, my womb, undoes me.— Here comes our general.

Enter Prince JOHN of Lancaster, WESTMORELAND, BLUNT, *and others.*

P. John. The heat is past; follow no further now:—
Call in the powers, good cousin Westmoreland.

[*Exit Westmoreland.*

Now, Falstaff, where have you been all this while?
When everything is ended, then you come:
These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,
One time or other break some gallows' back.

Fal. I would be sorry, my lord, but it should be thus: I never knew yet but rebuke and check was the reward of valor. Do you think me a swallow, an arrow, or a bullet? have I, in my poor and old motion, the expedition of thought? I have speeded hither with the very extremest inch of possibility; I have foundered nine-score and odd posts: and here, travel-tainted as I am, have, in my pure and immaculate valor, taken Sir John Colevile of the dale, a most furious knight and valorous enemy. But what of that? he saw me, and yielded; that I may justly say with the hook-nosed fellow of Rome,— I came, saw, and overcame.

P. John. It was more of his courtesy than your deserving.

Fal. I know not: — here he is, and here I yield him: and I beseech your grace, let it be booked with the rest of this day's deeds; or, by the Lord, I will have it in a particular ballad else, with mine own picture on the top of it, Colevile kissing my foot: to the which course if I be enforced, if you do not all show like gilt two-pences to me, and I, in the clear sky of fame, o'ershine you as much as the full moon doth the cinders of the element, which show like pins' heads to her, believe not the word of the noble: therefore let me have right, and let desert mount.

P. John. Thine's too heavy to mount.

Fal. Let it shine, then.

P. John. Thine's too thick to shine,

Fal. Let it do something, my good lord, that may do me good, and call it what you will.

P. John. Is thy name Colevile?

Cole. It is my lord.

P. John. A famous rebel art thou, Colevile.

Fal. And a famous true subject took him.
Cole. I am, my lord, but as my betters are,
That led me hither: had they been rul'd by me,
You should have won them dearer than you have.
Fal. I know not how they sold themselves: but thou, like a kind fellow, gavest thyself away gratis; and I thank thee for thee.

Re-enter WESTMORELAND.

P. John. Now, have you left pursuit?
West. Retreat is made, and execution stay'd.
P. John. Send Colevile, with his confederates,
To York, to present execution: —
Blunt, lead him hence; and see you guard him sure.
[*Exeunt Blunt and others with Colevile*
And now dispatch we toward the court, my lords:
I hear the king my father is sore sick:
Our news shall go before us to his majesty,—
Which, cousin, you shall bear,— to comfort him;
And we with sober speed will follow you.
Fal. My lord, beseech you, give me leave to go
Through Glostershire: and, when you come to court,
Stand my good lord, pray, in your good report.
P. John. Fare you well, Falstaff: I, in my condition,
Shall better speak of you than you deserve.
[*Exeunt all except Falstaff.*
Fal. I would you had but the wit: 'twere better than your dukedom.— Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy doth not love me; nor a man cannot make him laugh; — but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine. There's never any of these demure boys come to any proof; for thin drink doth so over-cool their blood, and making many fish-meals, that they fall into a kind of male green-sickness; and then, when they marry, they get wenches: they are generally fools and cowards;— which some of us should be too, but for inflammation. A good sherris-sack hath a twofold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes; which, delivered o'er to the voice (the tongue), which is the birth, become excellent wit. The second property of

your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice; but the sherris warms it, and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme: it illumineth the face, which, as a beacon, gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm; and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with his retinue, doth any deed of courage: and this valor comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work; and learning, a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it, and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it, that Prince Harry is valiant; for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean, sterile, and bare land, manured, husbanded, and tilled, with excellent endeavor of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them should be,—to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.

Enter BARDOLPH.

How now, Bardolph!

Bard. The army is discharged, all, and gone.

Fal. Let them go. I'll through Glostershire; and there will I visit Master Robert Shallow, esquire: I have him already tempering between my finger and my thumb and shortly will I seal with him. Come away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Westminster. The Jerusalem Chamber.*

Enter King HENRY, Duke of CLARENCE, Prince HUMPHREY, WARWICK, *and others.*

K. Hen. Now, lords, if God doth give successful end
To this debate that bleedeth at our doors,
We will our youth lead on to higher fields,
And draw no swords but what are sanctified.
Our navy is address'd, our power collected,
Our substitutes in absence well invested,
And every thing lies level to our wish:
Only, we want a little personal strength;

And pause us, till these rebels, now afoot,
Come underneath the yoke of government.
War. Both which we doubt not but your majesty
Shall soon enjoy.
K. Hen. Humphrey, my son of Gloster,
Where is the prince your brother?
P. Humph. I think he's gone to hunt, my lord, at Windsor.
K. Hen. And how accompanied?
P. Humph. I do not know, my lord.
K. Hen. Is not his brother, Thomas of Clarence, with him?
P. Humph. No, my good lord; he is in presence here.
Cla. What would my lord and father?
K. Hen. Nothing but well to thee, Thomas of Clarence.
How chance thou art not with the prince thy brother?
He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas;
Thou hast a better place in his affection
Than all thy brothers: cherish it, my boy;
And noble offices thou mayst effect
Of mediation, after I am dead,
Between his greatness and thy other brethren:
Therefore omit him not; blunt not his love,
Nor lose the good advantage of his grace
By seeming cold or careless of his will;
For he is gracious, if he be observ'd:
He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity:
Yet notwithstanding, being incens'd, he's flint;
As humorous as winter, and as sudden
As flaws congealèd in the spring of day.
His temper, therefore, must be well observ'd:
Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,
When you perceive his blood inclin'd to mirth;
But, being moody, give him line and scope,
Till that his passions, like a whale on ground,
Confound themselves with working. Learn this, Thomas
And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends;
A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,
That the united vessel of their blood,
Mingled with venom of suggestion —
As, force perforce, the age will pour it in —

Shall never leak, though it do work as strong
As aconitum or rash gunpowder.
Cla. I shall observe him with all care and love.
K. Hen. Why art thou not at Windsor with him, Thomas?
Cla. He is not there to-day; he dines in London.
K. Hen. And how accompanied? canst thou tell that?
Cla. With Pointz, and other his continual followers.
K. Hen. Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds;
And he, the noble image of my youth,
Is overspread with them: therefore my grief
Stretches itself beyond the hour of death:
The blood weeps from my heart, when I do shape,
In forms imaginary, th' unguided days
And rotten times that you shall look upon
When I am sleeping with my ancestors.
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,
When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,
When means and lavish manners meet together,
O, with what wings shall his affections fly
Towards fronting peril and oppos'd decay!
War. My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite:
The prince but studies his companions,
Like a strange tongue; wherein, to gain the language,
'Tis needful that the most immodest word
Be look'd upon and learn'd; which once attain'd,
Your highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,
The prince will, in the perfectness of time,
Cast off his followers; and their memory
Shall as a pattern or a measure live,
By which his grace must mete the lives of others,
Turning past evils to advantages.
K. Hen. 'Tis seldom-when the bee doth leave her comb
In the dead carrion.

Enter WESTMORELAND.

Who's here? Westmoreland?
West. Health to my sovereign, and new happiness
Added to that that I am to deliver!
Prince John, your son, doth kiss your grace's hand:
Mowbray, the Bishop Scroop, Hastings, and all,

Are brought to the correction of your law;
There is not now a rebel's sword unsheath'd,
But peace puts forth her olive every where:
The manner how this action hath been borne,
Here at more leisure may your highness read,
With every course in his particular. [*Giving packet.*
K. Hen. O Westmoreland, thou art a summer bird,
Which ever in the haunch of winter sings
The lifting-up of day.— Look, here's more news.

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. From enemies heaven keep your majesty;
And, when they stand against you, may they fall
As those that I am come to tell you of!
The Earl Northumberland and the Lord Bardolph,
With a great power of English and of Scots,
Are by the shrieve of Yorkshire overthrown:
The manner and true order of the fight, [*packet.*
This packet, please it you, contains at large. [*Giving*
K. Hen. And wherefore should these good news make me sick?
Will fortune never come with both hands full,
But write her fair words still in foulest letters?
She either gives a stomach, and no food,—
Such are the poor, in health; or else a feast,
And takes away the stomach,— such are the rich,
That have abundance, and enjoy it not.
I should rejoice now at this happy news;
And now my sight fails, and my brain is giddy:—
O me! come near me; now I am much ill. [*Falls back.*
P. Humph. Comfort, your majesty!
Cla. O my royal father!
West. My sovereign lord, cheer up yourself, look up.
War. Be patient, princes; you do know, these fits
Are with his highness very ordinary.
Stand from him, give him air; he'll straight be well.
Cla. No, no, he cannot long hold out these pangs:
Th' incessant care and labor of his mind
Hath wrought the mure, that should confine it in,
So thin, that life looks through, and will break out.
P. Humph. The people fear me; for they do observe
Unfather'd heirs and loathly births of nature:

The seasons change their manners, as the year
Had found some months asleep, and leap'd them over.
Cla. The river hath thrice flow'd, no ebb between;
And the old folk, time's doting chronicles,
Say it did so a little time before
That our great-grandsire, Edward, sick'd and died.
War. Speak lower, princes, for the king recovers.
P. Humph. This apoplex will certain be his end.
K. Hen. I pray you, take me up, and bear me hence
Into some other chamber: softly, pray.
[*They place the King on a bed; a change of scene being supposed here.*
Let there be no noise made, my gentle friends;
Unless some dull and favorable hand
Will whisper music to my weary spirit.
War. Call for the music in the other room.
K. Hen. Set me the crown upon my pillow here.
Cla. His eye is hollow, and he changes much.
War. Less noise, less noise!

Enter Prince HENRY.

P. Hen. Who saw the Duke of Clarence?
Cla. I am here, brother, full of heaviness.
P. Hen. How now! rain within doors, and none abroad!
How doth the king?
P. Humph. Exceeding ill.
P. Hen. Heard he
The good news yet? tell't him.
P. Humph. He alter'd much
Upon the hearing it.
P. Hen. If he be sick
With joy, he will recover without physic.
War. Not so much noise, my lords: — sweet prince, speak low;
The king your father is dispos'd to sleep.
Cla. Let us withdraw into the other room.
War. Will't please your grace to go along with us?
P. Hen. No; I will sit and watch here by the king.
[*Exeunt all except P. Henry.*
Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow,
Being so troublesome a bedfellow?
O polish'd perturbation! golden care!

That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide
To many a watchful night! — sleep with it now!
Yet not so sound and half so deeply sweet
As he whose brow with homely biggen bound
Snores out the watch of night. O majesty!
When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit
Like a rich armor worn in heat of day,
That scalds with safety. By his gates of breath
There lies a downy feather which stirs not:
Did he suspire, that light and weightless down
Perforce must move. — My gracious lord! my father! —
This sleep is sound indeed; this is a sleep,
That from this golden rigol hath divorc'd
So many English kings. Thy due from me
Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,
Which nature, love, and filial tenderness,
Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously:
My due from thee is this imperial crown,
Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,
Derives itself to me. Lo, here it sits,—

[*Putting it on his head.*

Which God shall guard: and put the world's whole strength
Into one giant arm, it shall not force
This lineal honor from me: this from thee
Will I to mine leave, as 'tis left to me. [*Exit.*

K. Hen. Warwick! Gloster! Clarence!

Re-enter WARWICK *and the rest.*

Cla. Doth the king call?

War. What would your majesty? how fares your grace?

K. Hen. Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

Cla. We left the prince my brother here, my liege,
Who undertook to sit and watch by you.

K. Hen. The Prince of Wales! Where is he? let me see him:
He is not here.

War. This door is open; he is gone this way.

P. Humph. He came not through the chamber where we stay'd.

K. Hen. Where is the crown? who took it from my pillow?
War. When we withdrew, my liege, we left it here.
K. Hen. The prince hath ta'en it hence:—go, seek him out.
Is he so hasty, that he doth suppose
My sleep my death?—
Find him, my Lord of Warwick; chide him hither.
[*Exit Warwick.*
This part of his conjoins with my disease,
And helps to end me.—See, sons, what things you are!
How quickly nature falls into revolt
When gold becomes her object!
For this the foolish over-careful fathers
Have broke their sleeps with thought, their brains with care,
Their bones with industry;
For this they have engrossèd and pil'd up
The canker'd heaps of strange-achievèd gold;
For this they have been thoughtful to invest
Their sons with arts and martial exercises:
When, like the bee, culling from every flower
The virtuous sweets,
Our thighs with wax, our mouths with honey pack'd,
We bring it to the hive; and, like the bees,
Are murder'd for our pains. This bitter taste
Yield his engrossments to the ending father.

Re-enter WARWICK.

Now, where is he that will not stay so long
Till his friend sickness hath determin'd me?
War. My lord, I found the prince in the next room,
Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks;
With such a deep demeanor in great sorrow,
That tyranny, which never quaff'd but blood,
Would, by beholding him, have wash'd his knife
With gentle eye-drops. He is coming hither.
K. Hen. But wherefore did he take away the crown?

Re-enter Prince HENRY.

Lo, where he comes.—Come hither to me, Harry.—
Depart the chamber, leave us here alone.
[*Exeunt all except K. Hen. and P. Hen.*

P. Hen. I never thought to hear you speak again.
K. Hen. Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought.
I stay too long by thee, I weary thee.
Dost thou so hunger for my empty chair,
That thou wilt needs invest thee with mine honors
Before thy hour be ripe? O foolish youth!
Thou seek'st the greatness that will overwhelm thee.
Stay but a little; for my cloud of dignity
Is held from falling with so weak a wind
That it will quickly drop: my day is dim.
Thou hast stol'n that which, after some few hours,
Were thine without offense; and at my death
Thou hast seal'd up my expectation:
Thy life did manifest thou loved'st me not,
And thou wilt have me die assur'd of it.
Thou hid'st a thousand daggers in thy thoughts,
Which thou hast whetted on thy stony heart,
To stab at half an hour of my life.
What! canst thou not forbear me half an hour?
Then, get thee gone, and dig my grave thyself;
And bid the merry bells ring to thine ear,
That thou art crownèd, not that I am dead.
Let all the tears that should bedew my hearse
Be drops of balm to sanctify thy head:
Only compound me with forgotten dust;
Give that which gave thee life unto the worms.
Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;
For now a time is come to mock at form:—
Harry the Fifth is crown'd:—up, vanity!
Down, royal state! all you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English court assemble now,
From every region, apes of idleness!
Now, neighbor confines, purge you of your scum:
Have you a ruffian that will swear, drink, dance,
Revel the night, rob, murder, and commit
The oldest sins the newest kind of ways?
Be happy, he will trouble you no more;
England shall double-gild his treble guilt,—
England shall give him office, honor, might;
For the Fifth Harry from curb'd license plucks
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog
Shall flesh his tooth in every innocent.

O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants!

P. Hen. O, pardon me, my liege! but for my tears,
[*Kneeling.*
The moist impediments unto my speech,
I had forestall'd this dear and deep rebuke,
Ere you with grief had spoke, and I had heard
The course of it so far. There is your crown;
And he that wears the crown immortally
Long guard it yours! If I affect it more
Than as your honor and as your renown,
Let me no more from this obedience rise,—
Which my most inward true and duteous spirit
Teacheth,—this prostrate and exterior bending!
God witness with me, when I here came in, [*Rising.*
And found no course of breath within your majesty,
How cold it struck my heart! If I do feign,
O, let me in my present wildness die,
And never live to show th' incredulous world
The noble change that I have purposèd!
Coming to look on you, thinking you dead,—
And dead almost, my liege, to think you were,—
I spake unto the crown as having sense,
And thus upbraided it: "The care on thee depending
Hath fed upon the body of my father;
Therefore, thou, best of gold, art worst of gold:
Other, less fine in carat, is more precious,
Preserving life in medicine potable;
But thou, most fine, most honor'd, most renown'd,
Hast eat thy bearer up." Thus, my most royal liege,
Accusing it, I put it on my head,
To try with it—as with an enemy
That had before my face murder'd my father—
The quarrel of a true inheritor.
But if it did infect my blood with joy,
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride;
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine
Did with the least affection of a welcome
Give entertainment to the might of it,—

Let God for ever keep it from my head,
And make me as the poorest vassal is,
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it!
K. Hen. O my son,
God put it in thy mind to take it hence,
That thou mightst win the more thy father's love,
Pleading so wisely in excuse of it.
Come hither, Harry, sit thou by my bed;
And hear, I think, the very latest counsel
That ever I shall breathe. God knows, my son,
By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown; and I myself know well
How troublesome it sat upon my head:
To thee it shall descend with better quiet,
Better opinion, better confirmation;
For all the soil of the achievement goes
With me into the earth. It seem'd in me
But as an honor snatch'd with boisterous hand;
And I had many living to upbraid
My gain of it by their assistances;
Which daily grew to quarrel and to bloodshed,
Wounding supposèd peace: all these bold fears
Thou see'st with peril I have answerèd;
For all my reign hath been but as a scene
Acting that argument: and now my death
Changes the mode; for what in me was purchas'd,
Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort;
So thou the garland wear'st successively.
Yet, though thou stand'st more sure than I could do,
Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green;
And all my foes, which thou must make thy friends,
Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out;
By whose fell working I was first advanc'd,
And by whose power I well might lodge a fear
To be again displac'd: which to avoid,
I cut some off, and had a purpose now
To lead out many to the Holy Land,
Lest rest and lying still might make them look
Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds
With foreign quarrels; that action, hence borne out
May waste the memory of the former days.

More would I, but my lungs are wasted so,
That strength of speech is utterly denied me.
How I came by the crown, O God forgive;
And grant it may with thee in true peace live!

P. Hen. My gracious liege,
You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me;
Then plain and right must my possession be:
Which I with more than with a common pain
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.

K. Hen. Look, look, here comes my John of Lancaster.

Enter Prince JOHN of Lancaster, WARWICK, Lords, *and others.*

P. John. Health, peace, and happiness to my royal father!

K. Hen. Thou bring'st me happiness and peace, son John;
But health, alack, with youthful wings is flown
From this bare wither'd trunk: upon thy sight,
My worldly business makes a period.—
Where is my Lord of Warwick?

P. Hen. My Lord of Warwick!

K. Hen. Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?

War. 'Tis call'd Jerusalem, my noble lord.

K. Hen. Laud be to God! — even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years,
I should not die but in Jerusalem;
Which vainly I suppos'd the Holy Land: —
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie;
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Gloucestershire. A hall in* SHALLOW'S *house.*

Enter SHALLOW, FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, *and* Page.

Shal. By cock and pie, sir, you shall not away to-night. – What, Davy, I say!

Fal. You must excuse me, Master Robert Shallow.

Shal. I will not excuse you; you shall not be excused; excuses shall not be admitted; there is no excuse shall serve; you shall not be excused.— Why, Davy!

Enter DAVY.

Davy. Here, sir.

Shal. Davy, Davy, Davy, Davy,— let me see, Davy; let me see, Davy; let me see:— yea, marry, William cook, bid him come hither.— Sir John, you shall not be excused.

Davy. Marry, sir, thus; those precepts cannot be served: and again, sir,— shall we sow the headland with wheat?

Shal. With red wheat, Davy. But for William cook: — are there no young pigeons?

Davy. Yes, sir.— Here is now the smith's note for shoeing and plow-irons.

Shal. Let it be cast, and paid.— Sir John, you shall not be excused.

Davy. Now, sir, a new link to the bucket must needs be had: — and, sir, do you mean to stop any of William's wages, about the sack he lost the other day at Hinckley fair?

Shal. 'A shall answer it.— Some pigeons, Davy, a couple of short-legged hens, a joint of mutton, and any pretty little tiny kickshaws, tell William cook.

Davy. Doth the man of war stay all night, sir?

Shal. Yea, Davy. I will use him well: a friend i' the court is better than a penny in purse. Use his men well, Davy; for they are arrant knaves, and will backbite.

Davy. No worse than they are backbitten, sir; for they have marvellous foul linen.

Shal. Well conceited, Davy: — about thy business, Davy.

Davy. I beseech you, sir, to countenance William Visor of Wincot against Clement Perkes of the hill.

Shal. There are many complaints, Davy, against that Visor: that Visor is an arrant knave, on my knowledge.

Davy. I grant your worship that he is a knave, sir; but yet, God forbid, sir, but a knave should have some countenance at his friend's request. An honest man, sir, is able to speak for himself, when a knave is not. I have

served your worship truly, sir, this eight years; and if I cannot once or twice in a quarter bear out a knave against an honest man, I have but a very little credit with your worship. The knave is mine honest friend, sir; therefore, I beseech your worship, let him be countenanced.

Shal. Go to; I say he shall have no wrong. Look about, Davy. [*Exit Davy.*] Where are you, Sir John? Come, come, come, off with your boots.— Give me your hand, Master Bardolph.

Bard. I am glad to see your worship.

Shal. I thank thee with all my heart, kind Master Bardolph: — [*To the Page*] and welcome, my tall fellow.— Come, Sir John.

Fal. I'll follow you, good Master Robert Shallow. [*Exit Shallow.*] Bardolph, look to our horses. [*Exeunt Bardolph and Page.*] If I were sawed into quantities, I should make four dozen of such bearded hermits'-staves as Master Shallow. It is a wonderful thing to see the semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his: they, by observing of him, do bear themselves like foolish justices; he, by conversing with them, is turned into a justice-like serving-man: their spirits are so married in conjunction with the participation of society, that they flock together in consent, like so many wild-geese. If I had a suit to Master Shallow, I would humor his men with the imputation of being near their master: if to his men, I would curry with Master Shallow, that no man could better command his servants. It is certain that either wise bearing or ignorant carriage is caught, as men take diseases, one of another: therefore let men take heed of their company. I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow to keep Prince Harry in continual laughter the wearing-out of six fashions,— which is four terms, or two actions,— and 'a shall laugh without *intervallums.* O, it is much that a lie with a slight oath, and a jest with a sad brow, will do with a fellow that never had the ache in his shoulders! O, you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up!

Shal. [*within*] Sir John!

Fal. I come, Master Shallow; I come, Master Shallow.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Westminster. A room in the palace.*

Enter, severally, WARWICK, *and the* Lord Chief Justice.

War. How now, my lord chief justice! whither away?
Ch. Just. How doth the king?
War. Exceeding well; his cares are now all ended.
Ch. Just. I hope, not dead.
War. He's walk'd the way of nature;
And, to our purposes, he lives no more.
Ch. Just. I would his majesty had call'd me with him:
The service that I truly did his life
Hath left me open to all injuries.
War. Indeed I think the young king loves you not.
Ch. Just. I know he doth not; and do arm myself
To welcome the condition of the time;
Which cannot look more hideously upon me
Than I have drawn it in my fantasy.
War. Here come the heavy issue of dead Harry:
O that the living Harry had the temper
Of him, the worst of these three gentlemen!
How many nobles then should hold their places,
That must strike sail to spirits of vile sort!
Ch. Just. O God, I fear all will be overturn'd!

Enter Prince JOHN, Prince HUMPHREY, Duke of CLARENCE, WESTMORELAND, *and others.*

P. John. Good morrow, cousin Warwick, good morrow.
P. Humph. } Good morrow, cousin.
Cla. }
P. John. We meet like men that had forgot to speak.
War. We do remember; but our argument
Is all too heavy to admit much talk.
P. John. Well, peace be with him that hath made us heavy!
Ch. Just. Peace be with us, lest we be heavier!
P. Humph. O, good my lord, you've lost a friend indeed;
And I dare swear you borrow not that face
Of seeming sorrow,— it is sure your own.
P. John. Though no man be assur'd what grace to find
You stand in coldest expectation:
I am the sorrier; would 'twere otherwise.

Cla. Well, you must now speak Sir John Falstaff fair;
Which swims against your stream of quality.
Ch. Just. Sweet princes, what I did, I did in honor,
Led by th' impartial conduct of my soul;
And never shall you see that I will beg
A raggèd and forestall'd remission.
If truth and upright innocency fail me,
I'll to the king my master that is dead,
And tell him who hath sent me after him.
War. Here comes the prince.

Enter King HENRY THE FIFTH, *attended.*

Ch. Just. Good morrow; and God save your majesty!
King. This new and gorgeous garment, majesty,
Sits not so easy on me as you think.—
Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear:
This is the English, not the Turkish court;
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry Harry. Yet be sad, good brothers,
For, by my faith, it very well becomes you:
Sorrow so royally in you appears,
That I will deeply put the fashion on,
And wear it in my heart: why, then, be sad;
But entertain no more of it, good brothers,
Than a joint burden laid upon us all.
For me, by heaven, I bid you be assur'd
I'll be your father and your brother too;
Let me but bear your love, I'll bear your cares:
Yet weep that Harry's dead; and so will I;
But Harry lives, that shall convert those tears,
By number, into hours of happiness.
Cla.
P. John. } We hope no other from your majesty.
P. Humph.
King. You all look strangely on me:—and you most;
[*To the Chief Justice.*
You are, I think, assur'd I love you not.
Ch. Just I am assur'd, if I be measur'd rightly,
Your majesty hath no just cause to hate me.
King. No!
How might a prince of my great hopes forget

So great indignities you laid upon me?
What! rate, rebuke, and roughly send to prison
Th' immediate heir of England! Was this easy?
May this be wash'd in Lethe and forgotten?

Ch. Just. I then did use the person of your father;
The image of his power lay then in me:
And in th' administration of his law,
Whiles I was busy for the commonwealth,
Your highness pleasèd to forget my place,
The majesty and power of law and justice,
The image of the king whom I presented,
And struck me in my very seat of judgment;
Whereon, as an offender to your father,
I gave bold way to my authority,
And did commit you. If the deed were ill,
Be you contented, wearing now the garland,
To have a son set your decrees at naught,
To pluck down justice from your awful bench,
To trip the course of law, and blunt the sword
That guards the peace and safety of your person,
Nay, more, to spurn at your most royal image,
And mock your workings in a second body.
Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours;
Be now the father, and propose a son;
Hear your own dignity so much profan'd,
See your most dreadful laws so loosely slighted,
Behold yourself so by a son disdain'd;
And then imagine me taking your part,
And, in your power, so silencing your son:
After this cold considerance, sentence me;
And, as you are a king, speak in your state
What I have done that misbecame my place,
My person, or my liege's sovereignty.

King. You are right, justice, and you weigh this well;
Therefore still bear the balance and the sword:
And I do wish your honors may increase,
Till you do live to see a son of mine
Offend you, and obey you, as I did.
So shall I live to speak my father's words:
"Happy am I, that have a man so bold
That dares do justice on my proper son;
And not less happy, having such a son

That would deliver up his greatness so
Into the hands of justice."— You did commit me:
For which, I do commit into your hand
Th' unstainèd sword that you have us'd to bear;
With this remembrance,— that you use the same
With the like bold, just, and impartial spirit
As you have done 'gainst me. There is my hand.
You shall be as a father to my youth:
My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear;
And I will stoop and humble my intents
To your well-practic'd wise directions.—
And, princes all, believe me, I beseech you;—
My father is gone wild into his grave,
For in his tomb lie my affections;
And with his spirit sadly I survive,
To mock the expectation of the world,
To frustrate prophecies, and to raze out
Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down
After my seeming. The tide of blood in me
Hath proudly flow'd in vanity till now:
Now doth it turn, and ebb back to the sea,
Where it shall mingle with the state of floods,
And flow henceforth in formal majesty.
Now call we our high court of parliament:
And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel,
That the great body of our state may go
In equal rank with the best-govern'd nation;
That war, or peace, or both at once, may be
As things acquainted and familiar to us;
In which you, father, shall have foremost hand.
[*To the Lord Chief Justice.*
Our coronation done, we will accite,
As I before remember'd, all our state:
And, God consigning to my good intents,
No prince nor peer shall have just cause to say,
God shorten Harry's happy life one day! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Gloucestershire. The garden of* SHALLOW'S *house.*

Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, SILENCE, BARDOLPH, *the* Page, *and* DAVY.

Shal. Nay, you shall see mine orchard, where, in an

arbor, we will eat a last year's pippin of my own graffing, with a dish of caraways, and so forth: — come, cousin Silence: — and then to bed.

Fal. 'Fore God, you have here a goodly dwelling and a rich.

Shal. Barren, barren, barren; beggars all, beggars all, Sir John — marry, good air.— Spread, Davy; spread, Davy: well said, Davy.

Fal. This Davy serves you for good uses; he is your serving-man and your husband.

Shal. A good varlet, a good varlet, a very good varlet, Sir John: — by the mass, I have drunk too much sack at supper: — a good varlet. Now sit down, now sit down: — come, cousin.

Sil. Ah, sirrah! quoth-a,— we shall
Do nothing but eat, and make good cheer,
[*Singing.*
And praise God for the merry year;
When flesh is cheap and females dear,
And lusty lads roam here and there
So merrily,
And ever-among so merrily.

Fal. There's a merry heart! — Good Master Silence, I'll give you a health for that anon.

Shal. Give Master Bardolph some wine, Davy.

Davy. Sweet sir, sit; I'll be with you anon; most sweet sir, sit.— Master page, good master page, sit. [*Bard. and Page sit at another table.*]— Proface! What you want in meat, we'll have in drink: but you must bear; — the heart's all. [*Exit.*

Shal. Be merry, Master Bardolph; — and, my little soldier there, be merry.

Sil. Be merry, be merry, my wife has all;
[*Singing.*
For women are shrews, both short and tall:
'Tis merry in hall when beards wag all,
And welcome merry Shrove-tide.
Be merry, be merry, &c.

Fal. I did not think Master Silence had been a man of this mettle.

Sil. Who, I? I have been merry twice and once ere now.

Re-enter DAVY.

Davy. There's a dish of leather-coats for you.
[*Setting them before Bardolph.*

Shal. Davy,—

Davy. Your worship? — [*To Bardolph*] I'll be with you straight.— A cup of wine, sir?

Sil. A cup of wine that's brisk and fine, [*Singing.*
And drink unto the leman mine;
And a merry heart lives long-a.

Fal. Well said, Master Silence.

Sil. And we shall be merry; — now comes in the sweet o' the night.

Fal. Health and long life to you, Master Silence!

Sil. Fill the cup, and let it come; [*Singing.*
I'll pledge you a mile to the bottom.

Shal. Honest Bardolph, welcome: if thou wantest any thing, and wilt not call, beshrew thy heart.— [*To the Page.*] Welcome, my little tiny thief, and welcome indeed too.— I'll drink to Master Bardolph, and to all the cavaleroes about London.

Davy. I hope to see London once ere I die.

Bard. An I might see you there, Davy,—

Shal. By the mass, you'll crack a quart together,— ha! will you not, Master Bardolph?

Bard. Yea, sir, in a pottle-pot.

Shal. By God's liggens, I thank thee: — the knave will stick by thee, I can assure thee that: 'a will not out; he is true bred.

Bard. And I'll stick by him, sir.

Shal. Why, there spoke a king. Lack nothing: be merry. [*Knocking within.*] Look who's at door there, ho! who knocks? [*Exit Davy.*

Fal. Why, now you have done me right.
[*To Silence, who has just drunk a bumper.*

Sil. Do me right, [*Singing.*
And dub me knight:
Samingo.

Is't not so?

Fal. 'Tis so.

Sil. Is't so? Why, then, say an old man can do somewhat.

Re-enter DAVY.

Davy. An't please your worship, there's one Pistol come from the court with news.

Fal. From the court! let him come in.

Enter PISTOL.

How now, Pistol!

Pist. Sir John, God save you!

Fal. What wind blew you hither, Pistol?

Pist. Not the ill wind which blows no man to good,—
Sweet knight, thou art now one of the greatest men in the realm.

Sil. By'r lady, I think 'a be, but goodman Puff of Barson.

Pist. Puff!
Puff in thy teeth, most recreant coward base!—
Sir John, I am thy Pistol and thy friend,
And helter-skelter have I rode to thee;
And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,
And golden times, and happy news of price.

Fal. I pray thee, now, deliver them like a man of this world.

Pist. A foutra for the world and worldlings base!
I speak of Africa and golden joys.

Fal. O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news?
Let King Cophetua know the truth thereof.

Sil. And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John. [*Singing.*

Pist. Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons?
And shall good news be baffled?
Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap.

Shal. Honest gentleman, I know not your breeding.

Pist. Why, then, lament therefóre.

Shal. Give me pardon, sir:—if, sir, you come with news from the court, I take it there's but two ways,—either to utter them, or to conceal them. I am, sir, under the king, in some authority.

Pist. Under which king, besonian? speak, or die.

Shal. Under King Harry.

Pist. Harry the Fourth? or Fifth?

Shal. Harry the Fourth.

Pist. A foutra for thine office!—

Sir John, thy tender lambkin now is king;
Harry the Fifth's the man. I speak the truth:
When Pistol lies, do this; and fig me, like
The bragging Spaniard.

Fal. What, is the old king dead?

Pist. As nail in door: the things I speak are just.

Fal. Away, Bardolph! saddle my horse,— Master Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine.—Pistol, I will double-charge thee with dignities.

Bard. O joyful day!—
I would not take a knighthood for my fortune.

Pist. What, I do bring good news?

Fal. Carry Master Silence to bed.— Master Shallow, my Lord Shallow, be what thou wilt; I am fortune's steward. Get on thy boots: we'll ride all night.— O sweet Pistol!— Away, Bardolph! [*Exit Bard.*]— Come, Pistol, utter more to me; and, withal, devise something to do thyself good.— Boot, boot, Master Shallow: I know the young king is sick for me. Let us take any man's horses; the laws of England are at my commandment. Blessed are they that have been my friends; and woe to my lord chief justice!

Pist. Let vultures vile seize on his lungs also!
"Where is the life that late I led?" say they:
Why, here it is;— welcome this pleasant day! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *London. A street.*

Enter Beadles, *dragging in* Hostess *and* DOLL TEARSHEET.

Host. No, thou arrant knave; I would to God that I might die, that I might have thee hanged: thou hast drawn my shoulder out of joint.

First Bead. The constables have delivered her over to me; and she shall have whipping-cheer enough, I warrant her: there hath been a man or two lately killed about her.

Dol. Nut-hook, nut-hook, you lie! Come on; I'll tell thee what, thou damned tripe-visaged rascal, an the child I go with do miscarry, thou wert better thou hadst struck thy mother, thou paper-faced villain.

Host. O the Lord, that Sir John were come! he would

make this a bloody day to somebody. But I pray God the fruit of her womb miscarry!

First Bead. If it do, you shall have a dozen of cushions again; you have but eleven now. Come, I charge you both go with me; for the man is dead that you and Pistol beat among you.

Dol. I'll tell thee what, thou thin man in a censer, I will have you as soundly swinged for this,— you bluebottle rogue, you filthy famished correctioner, if you be not swinged, I'll forswear half-kirtles.

First Bead. Come, come, you she knight-errant, come.

Host. O God, that right should thus overcome might! Well, of sufferance comes ease.

Dol. Come, you rogue, come; bring me to a justice.

Host. Ay, come, you starved bloodhound.

Dol. Goodman death, goodman bones!

Host. Thou atomy, thou!

Dol. Come, you thin thing; come, you rascal.

First Bead. Very well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A public place near Westminster Abbey.*

Enter three Grooms, *strewing rushes.*

First Groom. More rushes, more rushes.

Sec. Groom. The trumpets have sounded twice.

Third Groom. 'Twill be two o'clock ere they come from the coronation.

First Groom. Dispatch, dispatch. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, PISTOL, BARDOLPH, *and the* Page.

Fal. Stand here by me, Master Robert Shallow; I will make the king do you grace: I will leer upon him as 'a comes by; and do but mark the countenance that he will give me.

Pist. God bless thy lungs, good knight.

Fal. Come here, Pistol; stand behind me! — [*To Shallow.*] O if I had had time to have made new liveries, I would have bestowed the thousand pound I borrowed of you. But 'tis no matter: this poor show doth better: this doth infer the zeal I had to see him; —

Shal. It doth so.

Fal. It shows my earnestness of affection,—
Shal. It doth so.
Fal. My devotion,—
Shal. It doth, it doth, it doth.
Fal. As it were, to ride day and night; and not to deliberate, not to remember, not to have patience to shift me,—
Shal. It is most certain.
Fal. But to stand stained with travel, and sweating with desire to see him; thinking of nothing else, putting all affairs else in oblivion, as if there were nothing else to be done but to see him.
Pist. 'Tis *semper idem*, for *absque hoc nihil est:* 'tis all in every part.
Shal. 'Tis so, indeed.
Pist. My knight, I will inflame thy noble liver,
And make thee rage.
Thy Doll, and Helen of thy noble thoughts,
Is in base durance and contagious prison;
Hal'd thither
By most mechanical and dirty hand:—
Rouse up revenge from ebon den with fell Alecto's snake,
For Doll is in. Pistol speaks naught but truth.
Fal. I will deliver her.
[*Shouts within, and the trumpets sound,*
Pist. There roar'd the sea, and trumpet-clangor sounds.

Enter the King *and his Train, the* Lord Chief Justice *among them.*

Fal. God save thy grace, King Hal! my royal Hal!
Pist. The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal imp of fame!
Fal. God save thee, my sweet boy!
King. My lord chief justice, speak to that vain man.
Ch. Just. Have you your wits? know you what 'tis you speak?
Fal. My king! my Jove! I speak to thee, my heart!
King. I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!
I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swell'd, so old, and so profane;
But, being awake, I do despise my dream.

Make less thy body, hence, and more thy grace;
Leave gormandizing; know the grave doth gape
For thee thrice wider than for other men.—
Reply not to me with a fool-born jest:
Presume not that I am the thing I was;
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turn'd away my former self;
So will I those that kept me company.
When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
The tutor and the feeder of my riots:
Till then, I banish thee, on pain of death,—
As I have done the rest of my misleaders,—
Not to come near our person by ten mile.
For competence of life I will allow you,
That lack of means enforce you not to evil:
And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,
We will, according to your strength and qualities,
Give you advancement.— Be't your charge, my lord,
To see perform'd the tenor of our word.—
Set on. [*Exeunt King and his Train.*

Fal. Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pound.

Shal. Yea, marry, Sir John; which I beseech you to let me have home with me.

Fal. That can hardly be, Master Shallow. Do not you grieve at this; I shall be sent for in private to him: look you, he must seem thus to the world: fear not your advancement; I will be the man yet that shall make you great.

Shal. I cannot perceive how,—unless you give me your doublet, and stuff me out with straw. I beseech you, good Sir John, let me have five hundred of my thousand.

Fal. Sir, I will be as good as my word: this that you heard was but a color.

Shal. A color, I fear, that you will die in, Sir John.

Fal. Fear no colors: go with me to dinner:— come, Lieutenant Pistol;— come, Bardolph:— I shall be sent for soon at night.

Re-enter Prince JOHN, *the* Lord Chief Justice, Officers, *&c.*

Ch. Just. Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet;
Take all his company along with him.

Fal. My lord, my lord,—

Ch. Just. I cannot now speak: I will hear you soon.—
Take them away.

Pist. *Se fortuna mi tormenta lo sperare mi contenta.*
[*Exeunt Falstaff, Shallow, Pistol, Bardolph, and Page, with Officers.*

P. John. I like this fair proceeding of the king's:
He hath intent his wonted followers
Shall all be very well provided for;
But all are banish'd till their conversations
Appear more wise and modest to the world.

Ch. Just. And so they are.

P. John. The king hath call'd his parliament, my lord.

Ch. Just. He hath.

P. John. I will lay odds that, ere this year expire,
We bear our civil swords and native fire
As far as France: I heard a bird so sing,
Whose music, to my thinking, pleas'd the king.
Come, will you hence? [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by a Dancer.

First my fear: then my court'sy; last my speech. My fear is, your displeasure; my court'sy, my duty; and my speech, to beg your pardons. If you look for a good speech now, you undo me: for what I have to say is of mine own making; and what indeed I should say will, I doubt, prove mine own marring. But to the purpose, and so to the venture.—Be it known to you,—as it is very well,—I was lately here in the end of a displeasing play, to pray your patience for it, and to promise you a better. I did mean, indeed, to pay you with this; which, if, like an ill venture, it come unluckily home, I break, and you, my gentle creditors, lose. Here I promised you I would be, and here I commit my body to your mercies: bate me some, and I will pay you some, and, as most debtors do, promise you infinitely.

If my tongue cannot entreat you to acquit me, will you command me to use my legs? and yet that were but light payment,—to dance out of your debt. But a good

conscience will make any possible satisfaction, and so will I. All the gentlewomen here have forgiven me: if the gentlemen will not, then the gentlemen do not agree with the gentlewomen, which was never seen before in such an assembly.

One word more, I beseech you. If you be not too much cloyed with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katharine of France: where, for any thing know, Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already 'a be killed with your hard opinions; for Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man. My tongue is weary; when my legs are too, I will bid you good night; and so kneel down before you;—but, indeed, to pray for the queen.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.

From off a hill whose concave womb re-worded
A plaintful story from a sistering vale,
My spirits t' attend this double voice accorded,
And down I laid to list the sad-tun'd tale;
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale,
Tearing of papers, breaking rings a-twain,
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and rain.

Upon her head a platted hive of straw,
Which fortified her visage from the sun,
Whereon the thought might think sometime it saw
The carcass of a beauty spent and done:
Time had not scythèd all that youth begun,
Nor youth all quit; but, spite of heaven's fell rage,
Some beauty peep'd through lattice of sear'd age.

Oft did she heave her napkin to her eyne,
Which on it had conceited characters,
Laundering the silken figures in the brine
That season'd woe had pelleted in tears,
And often reading what contents it bears;
As often shrieking undistinguish'd woe,
In clamors of all size, both high and low.

Sometimes her level'd eyes their carriage ride,
As they did battery to the spheres intend;
Sometimes diverted their poor balls are tied
To th' orbèd earth; sometimes they do extend
Their view right on; anon their gazes lend
To every place at once, and, nowhere fix'd,
The mind and sight distractedly commix'd.

Her hair, nor loose nor tied in formal plat,
Proclaim'd in her a careless hand of pride;
For some, untuck'd, descended her sheav'd hat,
Hanging her pale and pinèd cheek beside;
Some in her threaden fillet still did bide,
And, true to bondage, would not break from thence,
Though slackly braided in loose negligence.

A thousand favors from a maund she drew
Of amber, crystal, and of beaded jet,
Which one by one she in a river threw,
Upon whose weeping margent she was set;
Like usury, applying wet to wet,
Or monarch's hands that let not bounty fall
Where want cries some, but where excess begs all.

Of folded schedules had she many a one,
Which she perus'd, sigh'd, tore, and gave the flood;
Crack'd many a ring of posied gold and bone,
Bidding them find their sepulchers in mud;
Found yet more letters sadly penn'd in blood,
With sleided silk feat and affectedly
Enswath'd, and seal'd to curious secrecy.

These often bath'd she in her fluxive eyes,
And often kiss'd, and often gan to tear;
Cried, "O false blood, thou register of lies,
What unapprovèd witness dost thou bear!
Ink would have seem'd more black and damnèd here!"
This said, in top of rage the lines she rents,
Big discontent so breaking their contents.

A reverend man that graz'd his cattle nigh —
Sometime a blusterer, that the ruffle knew
Of court, of city, and had let go by
The swiftest hours, observèd as they flew —
Towards this afflicted fancy fastly drew,
And, privileg'd by age, desires to know
In brief the grounds and motives of her woe.

So slides he down upon his grainèd bat,
And comely-distant sits he by her side;
When he again desires her, being sat,

Her grievance with his hearing to divide :
If that from him there may be aught applied
Which may her suffering ecstasy assuage,
'Tis promis'd in the charity of age.

"Father," she says, "though in me you behold
The injury of many a blasting hour,
Let it not tell your judgment I am old;
Not age, but sorrow, over me hath power :
I might as yet have been a spreading flower,
Fresh to myself, if I had self-applied
Love to myself, and to no love beside.

"But, woe is me! too early I attended
A youthful suit — it was to gain my grace —
Of one by nature's outwards so commended,
That maidens' eyes stuck over all his face :
Love lack'd a dwelling, and made him her place;
And when in his fair parts she did abide,
She was new lodg'd, and newly deified.

"His browny locks did hang in crookèd curls ;
And every light occasion of the wind
Upon his lips their silken parcels hurls.
What's sweet to do, to do will aptly find :
Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind;
For on his visage was in little drawn
What largeness thinks in Paradise was sawn.

"Small show of man was yet upon his chin;
His phœnix down began but to appear,
Like unshorn velvet, on that termless skin,
Whose bare out-bragg'd the web it seem'd to wear :
Yet show'd his visage by that cost more dear ;
And nice affections wavering stood in doubt
If best were as it was, or best without.

"His qualities were beauteous as his form,
For maiden-tongu'd he was, and thereof free ;
Yet, if men mov'd him, was he such a storm
As oft 'twixt May and April is to see,
When winds breathe sweet, unruly though they be.

His rudeness so with his authóriz'd youth
Did livery falseness in a pride of truth.

" Well could he ride, and often men would say,
'That horse his mettle from his rider takes :
Proud of subjection, noble by the sway,
What rounds, what bounds, what course, what stop he makes !'
And controversy hence a question takes,
Whether the horse by him became his deed,
Or he his manage by the well-doing steed.

" But quickly on this side the verdict went :
His real habitude gave life and grace
To appertainings and to ornament,
Accomplish'd in himself, not in his case :
All aids, themselves made fairer by their place,
Came for additions ; yet their purpos'd trim
Piec'd not his grace, but were all grac'd by him.

" So on the tip of his subduing tongue
All kind of arguments and question deep,
All replication prompt, and reason strong,
For his advantage still did wake and sleep :
To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weep,
He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will :

" That he did in the general bosom reign
Of young, of old ; and sexes both enchanted,
To dwell with him in thoughts, or to remain
In personal duty, following where he haunted :
Consents bewitch'd, ere he desire, have granted ;
And dialogu'd for him what he would say,
Ask'd their own wills, and made their wills obey.

" Many there were that did his picture get,
To serve their eyes, and in it put their mind ;
Like fools that in th' imagination set
The goodly objects which abroad they find
Of lands and mansions, theirs in thought assign'd ;
And laboring in more pleasures to bestow them
Than the true gouty landlord which doth owe them :

"So many have, that never touch'd his hand,
Sweetly suppos'd them mistress' of his heart.
My woful self, that did in freedom stand,
And was my own fee-simple, not in part,
What with his art in youth, and youth in art,
Threw my affections in his charmèd power,
Reserv'd the stalk, and gave him all my flower.

"Yet did I not, as some my equals did,
Demand of him, nor being desir'd yielded;
Finding myself in honor so forbid,
With safest distance I mine honor shielded:
Experience for me many bulwarks builded
Of proofs new-bleeding, which remain'd the foil
Of this false jewel, and his amorous spoil.

"But, ah, who ever shunn'd by precedent
The destin'd ill she must herself assay?
Or forc'd examples, 'gainst her own content,
To put the by-pass'd perils in her way?
Counsel may stop awhile what will not stay;
For when we rage, advice is often seen
By blunting us to make our wits more keen.

"Nor gives it satisfaction to our blood,
That we must curb it upon others' proof;
To be forbod the sweets that seem so good,
For fear of harms that preach in our behoof.
O appetite, from judgment stand aloof!
The one a palate hath that needs will taste,
Though Reason weep, and cry, 'It is thy last.'

"For further I could say, 'This man's untrue,'
And knew the patterns of his foul beguiling;
Heard where his plants in others' orchards grew,
Saw how deceits were gilded in his smiling;
Knew vows were ever brokers to defiling;
Thought characters and words merely but art,
And bastards of his foul-adulterate heart.

"And long upon these terms I held my city,
Till thus he gan besiege me: 'Gentle maid,
Have of my suffering youth some feeling pity,

And be not of my holy vows afraid :
That's to ye sworn to none was ever said ;
For feasts of love I have been call'd unto,
Till now did ne'er invite, nor never woo.

" 'All my offenses that abroad you see
Are errors of the blood, none of the mind ;
Love made them not : with acture they may be,
Where neither party is nor true nor kind :
They sought their shame that so their shame did find ,
And so much less of shame in me remains,
By how much of me their reproach contains.

" 'Among the many that mine eyes have seen,
Not one whose flame my heart so much as warm'd,
Or my affection put to the smallest teen,
Or any of my leisures ever charm'd :
Harm have I done to them, but ne'er was harm'd ;
Kept hearts in liveries, but mine own was free,
And reign'd, commanding in his monarchy.

" 'Look here, what tributes wounded fancies sent me,
Of palèd pearls and rubies red as blood ;
Figuring that they their passions likewise lent me
Of grief and blushes, aptly understood
In bloodless white and the encrimson'd mood ;
Effects of terror and dear modesty,
Encamp'd in hearts, but fighting outwardly.

" 'And, lo, behold these talents of their hair,
With twisted metal amorously impleach'd,
I have receiv'd from many a several fair,—
Their kind acceptance weepingly beseech'd,—
With the annexions of fair gems enrich'd,
And deep-brain'd sonnets that did amplify
Each stone's dear nature, worth, and quality.

" 'The diamond,— why, 'twas beautiful and hard,
Whereto his invis'd properties did tend ;
The deep-green emerald, in whose fresh regard
Weak sights their sickly radiance do amend ;
The heaven-hu'd sapphire, and the opal blend

With objects manifold: each several stone,
With wit well blazon'd, smil'd or made some moan.

"'Lo, all these trophies of affections hot,
Of pensiv'd and subdu'd desires the tender,
Nature hath charg'd me that I hoard them not,
But yield them up where I myself must render,
That is, to you, my origin and ender;
For these, of force, must your oblations be,
Since I there altar, you enpatron me.

"'O, then, advance of yours that phraseless hand,
Whose white weighs down the airy scale of praise;
Take all these similes to your own command,
Hallow'd with sighs that burning lungs did raise;
What me your minister, for you obeys,
Works under you; and to your audit comes
Their distract parcels in combinèd sums.

"'Lo, this device was sent me from a nun,
A sister sanctified, of holiest note;
Which late her noble suit in court did shun,
Whose rarest havings made the blossoms dote;
For she was sought by spirits of richest coat,
But kept cold distance, and did thence remove,
To spend her living in eternal love.

"'But, O my sweet, what labor is't to leave
The thing we have not, mastering what not strives,—
Paling the place which did no form receive,
Playing patient sports in unconstrainèd gyves?
She that her fame so to herself contrives,
The scars of battle scapeth by the flight,
And makes her absence valiant, not her might.

"'O, pardon me, in that my boast is true:
The accident which brought me to her eye
Upon the moment did her force subdue,
And now she would the cagèd cloister fly:
Religious love put out Religion's eye:
Not to be tempted, would she be immur'd,
And now, to tempt all, liberty procur'd.

" 'How mighty, then, you are, O, hear me tell!
The broken bosoms that to me belong
Have emptied all their fountains in my well,
And mine I pour your ocean all among:
I strong o'er them, and you o'er me being strong.
Must for your victory us all congest,
As compound love to physic your cold breast.

" 'My parts had power to charm a sacred nun,
Who, disciplin'd, ay, dieted in grace,
Believ'd her eyes when they t' assail begun,
All vows and consecrations giving place:
O most potential love! vow, bond, nor space,
In thee hath neither sting, knot, nor confine,
For thou art all, and all things else are thine.

" 'When thou impressest, what are precepts worth
Of stale example? When thou wilt inflame,
How coldly those impediments stand forth
Of wealth, of filial fear, law, kindred, fame! [shame;
Love's arms are peace, 'gainst rule, 'gainst sense, 'gainst
And sweetens, in the suffering pangs it bears,
The aloes of all forces, shocks, and fears.

" 'Now all these hearts that do on mine depend,
Feeling it break, with bleeding groans they pine;
And supplicant their sighs to you extend,
To leave the battery that you make 'gainst mine,
Lending soft audience to my sweet design,
And credent soul to that strong-bonded oath
That shall prefer and undertake my troth.'

" This said, his watery eyes he did dismount,
Whose sights till then were level'd on my face;
Each cheek a river running from a fount
With brinish current downward flow'd apace:
O, how the channel to the stream gave grace!
Who glaz'd with crystal gate the glowing roses
That flame through water which their hue encloses.

" O father, what a hell of witchcraft lies
In the small orb of one particular tear!
But with the inundation of the eyes

What rocky heart to water will not wear?
What breast so cold that is not warmèd here?
O cleft effect! cold modesty, hot wrath,
Both fire from hence and chill extincture hath.

"For, lo, his passion, but an art of craft,
Even there resolv'd my reason into tears;
There my white stole of chastity I daff'd,
Shook off my sober guards and civil fears;
Appear to him, as he to me appears,
All melting; though our drops this difference bore,
His poison'd me, and mine did him restore.

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
Applied to cautels, all strange forms receives,
Of burning blushes, or of weeping water,
Or swooning paleness; and he takes and leaves,
In either's aptness, as it best deceives,
To blush at speeches rank, to weep at woes,
Or to turn white and swoon at tragic shows:

"That not a heart which in his level came
Could scape the hail of his all-hurting aim,
Showing fair nature is both kind and tame;
And, veil'd in them, did win whom he would maim:
Against the thing he sought he would exclaim;
When he most burn'd in heart-wish'd luxury,
He preach'd pure maid, and prais'd cold chastity.

"Thus merely with the garment of a Grace
The naked and concealèd fiend he cover'd;
That th' unexperient gave the tempter place,
Which, like a cherubin, above them hover'd.
Who, young and simple, would not be so lover'd?
Ay me! I fell; and yet do question make
What I should do again for such a sake.

"O, that infected moisture of his eye,
O, that false fire which in his cheek so glow'd,
O, that forc'd thunder from his heart did fly,
O, that sad breath his spongy lungs bestow'd,
O, all that borrow'd motion seeming ow'd,
Would yet again betray the fore-betray'd,
And new pervert a reconcilèd maid!"

KING LEAR.

KING LEAR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR, king of Britain.
King of France.
Duke of Burgundy.
Duke of Cornwall.
Duke of Albany.
Earl of Kent.
Earl of Gloster.
EDGAR son to Gloster.
EDMUND, bastard son to Gloster.
CURAN, a courtier.
Old Man, tenant to Gloster.
Doctor.
Fool.
OSWALD, steward to Goneril.
An Officer employed by Edmund.
Gentleman attendant on Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants to Cornwall.
GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, } daughters to Lear.

Knights attending on Lear, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE—*Britain.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A room of state in* King LEAR'S *palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have

so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to't.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother could: whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glo. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My Lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honorable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. [*Sennet within.*] — The King is coming.

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France and Burgundy, Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt Gloster and Edmund.*

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.—
Give me the map there.— Know that we've divided
In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death.— Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,

Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd.— Tell me, my daughters,—
Since now we will divest us both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,—
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir,
I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valu'd, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honor;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. [*aside*] What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.— What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. Sir,
I'm made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short,— that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Cor. [*aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Gonerll.— Now, our joy,
Although our last, not least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy

Strive to be interess'd ; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak.
Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing !
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing : speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth : I love your majesty
According to my bond ; nor more nor less.
Lear. How, how, Cordelia ! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me : I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all ? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty :
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.
Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?
Cor. Ay, good my lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender ?
Cor. So young, my lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so,— thy truth, then, be thy dower :
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night ;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist, and cease to be ;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbor'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.
Kent. Good my liege,—
Lear. Peace, Kent !
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.—
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest

On her kind nursery.— Hence, and avoid my sight! —
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her! — Call France; — who stirs?
Call Burgundy.— Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty.— Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
The name, and all th' additions to a king;
The sway,
Revenue, execution of the rest,
Belovèd sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the crown.*

Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honor'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honor's bound,
When majesty falls to folly. Reverse thy doom;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Alb., Corn. Dear sir, forbear.
Kent. Do;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift;
Or, whilst I can vent clamor from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.
Lear. Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance, hear me!—
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,—
Which we durst never yet,— and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,—
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,—
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world;
And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.
Kent. Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.—
[*To Cordelia*] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!—
[*To Regan and Goneril*] And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
That good effects may spring from words of love.—
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Re-enter GLOSTER, *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and* Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.
Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rival'd for our daughter: what, in the least,

Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?
Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.
Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She's there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?
Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.
Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—[*To France*] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
T' avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost t' acknowledge hers.
France. This is most strange,
That she, who even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dear'st, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favor. Sure, her offense
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Should never plant in me.
Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak,—that you make known

It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonor'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favor;
But even for want of that for which I'm richer,—
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not t' have pleas'd me better.

France. Is it but this,— a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? — My Lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I'm sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be't lawful I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—
Bid them farewall, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou losest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again: — Therefore be gone

Without our grace, our love, our benison.—
Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish. Exeunt Lear, Burgundy, Cornwall Albany, Gloster, and Attendants.*

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father:
To your professèd bosoms I commit him:
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.

Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides.
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking be-

tween France and him. Pray you, let us hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in the* Earl of GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tirèd bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? — Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word,— legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper: —
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscrib'd his power!
Confin'd to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! — Edmund, how now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.
[*Putting up the letter.*

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'er-looking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glo. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*reads*] "This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, EDGAR."

Hum — conspiracy! — "Sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue," — My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? — When came this to you? who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord,— there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Has he never before sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers de-

clining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain! — His very opinion in the letter! — Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! — Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him: — abominable villain! — Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honor, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honor, and to no other pretense of danger.

Glo. Think you so?

Edm. If your honor judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster —

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.— Heaven and earth! — Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves.— Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully.— And the noble and true-

hearted Kent banished! his offense, honesty! — 'Tis strange. [*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,— often the surfeit of our own behavior,— we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *ursa major;* so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous.— Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.—Edgar! pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam.

Enter EDGAR.

O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word nor countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him; and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there's my key: — if you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you: I have told you what I have seen and heard but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business. [*Exit Edgar.*

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! — I see the business.—
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in the* Duke of ALBANY'S *palace.*

Enter GONERIL *and* OSWALD.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night, he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle.—When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick: —
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.
[*Horns within.*

Osw. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! — Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd
With checks as flatteries,— when they're seen abus'd.
Remember what I have said.
Osw. Very well, madam.
Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: — I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course.— Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A hall in the same.*

Enter KENT, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness. — Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labors.

Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now! what art thou?
Kent. A man, sir.
Lear. What dost thou profess? What wouldst thou with us?
Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.
Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet.—Dinner, ho, dinner!—Where's my knave? my fool?—Go you, and call my fool hither. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Osw. So please you,— [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back. [*Exit a Knight.*]—Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.

Re-enter Knight.

How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but,

to my judgment, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretense and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit an Attendant.*]—Go you, call hither my fool.

[*Exit an Attendant.*

Re-enter OSWALD.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. "My lady's father"! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Striking him.*

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base football player.

[*Tripping up his heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so.

[*Pushes Oswald out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service. [*Giving Kent money*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too: — here's my coxcomb.
[*Offering Kent his cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that's out of favor: nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb.— How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah,— the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when the lady brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle;

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer,— you gave me nothing for't.— Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*To Kent*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsel'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,—
Do thou for him stand;
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching.— Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' the middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.

Fools had ne'er less grace in a year; [*Singing.*
For wise men are grown foppish,
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, e'er since thou madest thy daughters thy mothers: for when thou gavest them the rod, and puttedst down thine own breeches,

Then they for sudden joy did weep, [*Singing.*
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie : I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are : they'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying ; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool : and yet I would not be thee, nuncle ; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle : — here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter ! what makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late i' the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning ; now thou art an O without a figure : I am better than thou art now ; I am a fool, thou art nothing.— [*To Gon.*] Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue ; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.—

That's a shealed peascod. [*Pointing to Lear.*

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel ; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endurèd riots.
Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
T' have found a safe redress ; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance ; which if you should, the fault
Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offense,

Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.
Fool. For, you trow, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.
Lear. Are you our daughter?
Gon. Come, sir,
I would you would make use of that good wisdom
Whereof I know you're fraught; and put away
These dispositions, that of late transform you
From what you rightly are.
Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? — Whoop, Jug! I love thee.
Lear. Doth any here know me? — Why, this is not Lear:
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, or his discernings
Are lethargied — Ha! waking? 'tis not so.—
Who is it that can tell me who I am? —
Fool. Lear's shadow.
Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty,
Knowledge, and reason, I should be false-persuaded
I had daughters.
Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.
Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?
Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savor
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd, and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be, then, desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,

To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves and you,
Lear. Darkness and devils! —
Saddle my horses; call my train together.—
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.
Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents.— [*To Alb.*] O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir.— Prepare my horses.—
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!
Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.
Lear. [*To Gon.*] Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name.— O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*
And thy dear judgment out! — Go, go, my people.
Alb. My lord, I'm guiltless, as I'm ignorant
Of what hath mov'd you.
Lear. It may be so, my lord.—
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honor her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;

Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt,— that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! — Away, away! [*Exit.*

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap!
Within a fortnight?

Alb. What's the matter, sir?

Lear. I'll tell thee.— [*To Gon.*] Life and death! I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them.— Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! — Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay.— Ha, is it come to this?
Let it be so: — I have another daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolvish visage. Thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever; thou shalt, I warrant thee.
[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. Pray you, content.— What, Oswald, ho! —
[*To the Fool.*] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry, and take the fool with thee.—

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,

Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter:
So the fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel:—a hundred knights!
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep
At point a hundred knights: yes, that, on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!—
Alb. Well, you may fear too far.
Gon. Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd th' unfitness,—

Re-enter OSWALD.

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours,
Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.
Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.
Gon. Nay, then—
Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Court before the same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these letters.
Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you

know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can what I can tell.

Lear. What canst tell, boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong —

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature.— So kind a father! — Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take't again perforce! — Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Enter Gentleman.

How now! are the horses ready?
Gent. Ready, my lord.
Lear. Come, boy.
Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A court within the castle of the* Earl of GLOSTER.

Enter EDMUND *and* CURAN, *meeting.*

Edm. Save thee, Curan.
Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.
Edm. How comes that?
Cur. Nay, I know not.— You have heard of the news abroad,— I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?
Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?
Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?
Edm. Not a word.
Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir.
[*Exit.*
Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act:— briefness and fortune, work!—
Brother, a word;— descend:— brother, I say!

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches:— O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You've now the good advantage of the night:—
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' th' haste,

And Regan with him : have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.
Edg. I'm sure on't, not a word.
Edm. I hear my father coming : — pardon me ;
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you : —
Draw: seem to defend yourself : now quit you well.—
Yield : — come before my father.— Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother.—Torches, torches! — So, farewell.
[*Exit Edgar.*
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavor : I've seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport.— Father, father! —
Stop, stop! — No help?

Enter GLOSTER, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?
Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, cónjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress,—
Glo. But where is he?
Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.
Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund?
Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could —
Glo. Pursue him, ho! — Go after. [*Exeunt some Servants.*]—By no means what?
Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship ;
But that I told him the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend ;
Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father ; — sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his preparèd sword he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm :
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to th' encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.
Glo. Let him fly far :

Not in this land shall he remain uncaught :
And found — dispatch.— The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night :
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake ;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threatened to discover him : he replied,
" Thou unpossessing bastard ! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth, in thee
Make thy words faith'd ? No : what I should deny,—
As this I would ; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character,— I'd turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damnèd practice :
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it."

Glo. Strong and fasten'd villain !
Would he deny his letter ? — I never got him.—
[*Tucket within.*
Hark, the duke's trumpets ! I know not why he comes.—
All ports I'll bar ; the villain shall not scape ;
The duke must grant me that : besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him ; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend ! since I came hither,—
Which I can call but now,— I've heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue th' offender. How dost, my lord ?

Glo. O madam, my old heart is crack'd,— it's crack'd !

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life ?
He whom my father nam'd ? your Edgar ?

Glo. O lady, lady, shame would have it hid !

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?
Glo. I know not, madam: —'tis too bad, too bad.
Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.
Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th' expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.
Glo. He did bewray his practice: and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursu'd?
Glo. Ay, my good lord.
Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please.— For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.
Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.
Glo. For him I thank your grace.
Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—
Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice:—
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.
Glo. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter KENT *and* OSWALD, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?
Kent. Ay.
Osw. Where may we set our horses?
Kent. I' the mire.
Osw. Prithee, if thou loves me, tell me.
Kent. I love thee not.
Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.
Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.
Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.
Kent. Fellow, I know thee.
Osw. What dost thou know me for?
Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pander, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.
Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!
Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days since I tripped up thy heels. and beat thee, before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw. [*Drawing his sword.*
Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.
Kent. Draw, you rascal; you come with letters against the king; and take Vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks: — draw, you rascal; come your ways.
Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!
Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. How now! What's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please: come, I'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Servants.

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives;
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valor. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours o' the trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his gray beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter!—My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him. "Spare my gray beard," you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,

Knowing naught, like dogs, but following.—
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.
Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?
Glo. How fell you out? say that.
Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.
Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What's his offense?
Kent. His countenance likes me not.
Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.
Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.
Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth!
And they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbor more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly-ducking óbservants
That stretch their duties nicely.
Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under th' allowance of your great aspéct,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front,—
Corn. What mean'st by this?
Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you in a plain accent was a plain knave; which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to't.
Corn. What was the offense you gave him?
Osw. I never gave him any:
It pleas'd the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,

Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!—
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you —

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!—As I have life and honor,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same color
Our sister speaks of.— Come, bring away the stocks!

[*Stocks brought out.*

Glo. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for't: your purpos'd low correction
In such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valu'd in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs.— Put in his legs.—

[*Kent is put in the stocks.*

Come, my lord, away. [*Exeunt all except Gloster and Kent.*

Glo. I'm sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.
Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I've watch'd, and travel'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!
Glo. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.
[*Exit.*
Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,—
Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! — Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: — I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscurèd course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies.— All weary and o'er-watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel!
[*Sleeps.*

SCENE III. *The open country.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may scape,
I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent

Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity.— "Poor Turlygood! poor Tom!"
That's something yet: — Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before* GLOSTER'S *castle;* KENT *in the stocks.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and* Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the head, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs: when a man's overlusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she,—
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no, they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.
Lear. They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:

Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations ;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read : on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,—
Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,—
Having more man than wit about me, drew :
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind ;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to the poor.—

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolors for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart ! *Hysterica passio,*— down, thou climbing sorrow, Thy element's below ! — Where is this daughter ?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not ; Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offense but what you speak of ?

Kent. None.
How chance the king comes with so small a train ?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no laboring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
  And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
  And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
  And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away:
  The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR *with* GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They're sick? they're weary?
They have travel'd all the night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying-off.
Fetch me a better answer.

Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak to the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? — My breath and blood! —
Fiery? the fiery duke? — Tell the hot duke that —
No, but not yet: — may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we're not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man. — Death on my state! wherefóre
[*Looking on Kent.*
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the duke and 's wife I'd speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.

Glo. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! — but, down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cried, "Down, wantons, down!" 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace!
[*Kent is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchering an adultress. — [*To Kent*] O, are you free?
Some other time for that. — Belovèd Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here, —
[*Points to his heart.*

I can scarce speak to thee, thou'lt not believe
Of how deprav'd a quality—O Regan!
Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say, how is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd, and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old; [*Kneeling.*
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."
Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.
Lear. [*rising*] Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart;—
All the stor'd vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!
Corn. Fie, sir, fie!
Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!
Reg. O the blest gods! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.
Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse:
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give

Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce ; but thine
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks ? [*Tucket within.*

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

Reg. I know't,—my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come ?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.—
Out, varlet, from my sight !

Corn. What means your grace ?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on't.— Who comes here ? O heavens,

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause ; send down, and take my part ! —
[*To Gon.*] Art not asham'd to look upon this beard ? —
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir ? How have I offended ?
All's not offense that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides, you are too tough ;
Will you yet hold ? — How came my man i' the stocks ?

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You ! did you ?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,

You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me :
I'm now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' th' air ;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch ! — Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot.— Return with her ?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad :
I will not trouble thee, my child ; farewell :
We'll no more meet, no more see one another : —
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter ;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine : thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossèd carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it :
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove :
Mend when thou canst ; be better at thy leisure :
I can be patient ; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.

Reg. Not altogether so :
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister ;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so —
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir : what, fifty followers ?
Is it not well? What should you need of more ?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number ? How, in one house,

Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.
Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants or from mine?
Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack you,
We could control them. If you will come to me,—
For now I spy a danger,—I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty: to no more
Will I give place or notice.
Lear. I gave you all —
Reg. And in good time you gave it.
Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty, Regan? said you so?
Reg. And speak't again, my lord; no more with me.
Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favor'd,
When others are more wicked; not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise.— [*To Gon.*] I'll go with thee:
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.
Gon. Hear me, my lord:
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need,—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,

And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks! — No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall — I will do such things,—
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep: —
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or e'er I'll weep.— O fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt Lear, Gloster, Kent, and Fool.*
Storm heard at a distance.

Corn. Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm.
Reg. This house is little: the old man and his people
Cannot be well bestow'd.
Gon. 'Tis his own blame; 'hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.
Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.
Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my Lord of Gloster?
Corn. Follow'd the old man forth: — he is return'd.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. The king is in high rage.
Corn. Whither is he going?
Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.
Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.
Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.
Glo. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.
Reg. O, sir, to willful men
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.
Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:
My Regan counsels well: come out o' the storm.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A heath.*

A storm, with thunder and lightning. Enter KENT *and a* Gentleman, *meeting.*

Kent. Who's there, besides foul weather?
Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
Kent. I know you. Where's the king?
Gent. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curlèd waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man t' out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinchèd wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
Kent. But who is with him?
Gent. None but the fool; who labors to out-jest
His heart-struck injuries.
Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There's division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have — as who have not, that their great stars
Throne and set high? — servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes;
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings;—
But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner.— Now to you:

If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,—
As fear not but you shall,— show her this ring;
And she will tell you who your fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand: have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet,—
That, when we've found the king,— in which your pain
That way, I'll this,— he that first lights on him
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II. *Another part of the heath. Storm continues.*

Enter LEAR *and* Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's molds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing: here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man: —
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this! O! O! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put's head in has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse; —
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake:

for there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

Lear. No. I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.

Enter KENT.

Kent. Who's there?

Fool. Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
Th' affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;

Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous : caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practic'd on man's life ; close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace.— I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed !
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel ;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest :
Repose you there ; while I to this hard house —
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis rais'd ;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in — return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
Come on, my boy : how dost, my boy ? art cold ?
I'm cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow ?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.—
Poor fool and knave, I've one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. He that has and a little tiny wit,— [*Singing.*
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy.— Come, bring us to this hovel. [*Exeunt Lear and Kent.*

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtesan.— I'll speak a prophecy ere I go :

When priests are more in word than matter ;
When brewers mar their malt with water ;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors ;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors ;
When every case in law is right ;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;
When slanders do not live in tongues ;
Nor cutpurses come to throngs ;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field ;
And bawds and whores do churches build ; —

Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter GLOSTER *and* EDMUND.

Glo. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glo. Go to; say you nothing. There is division between the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this night; —'tis dangerous to be spoken; —I have locked the letter in my closet: these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there is part of a power already footed: we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you, and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: if he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too: —
This seems a fair discerning, and must draw me
That which my father loses,— no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *A part of the heath, with a hovel. Storm continues.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the wind's free,
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there.— Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't? — But I will punish home: —
No, I will weep no more.— In such a night
To shut me out! — Pour on; I will endure: —
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril! —
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. — But I'll go in. —
[*To the Fool*] In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—
[*Fool goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
Edg. [*within*] Fathom and half, fathom and half!
Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?

Come forth.

Enter EDGAR *disguised as a madman.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!—

Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—

Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Didst thou give all to thy daughters? And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, though ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor.—Bless thy five wits!—Tom's a-cold,—O, do de, do de, do de.—Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes:—there could I have him now,—and there,—and there again, and there. [*Storm continues.*

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?—

Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give' em all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature
To such a lowness but his únkind daughters.—
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill :—
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo !

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend : obey thy parents ; keep thy word justly ; swear not ; commit not with man's sworn spouse ; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been ?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind ; that curled my hair ; wore gloves in my cap ; served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her ; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven : one that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it : wine loved I deeply, dice dearly ; and in woman out-paramoured the Turk : false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand ; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of siks betray thy poor heart to woman : keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—

Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind ;
Says suum, mun, nonny.
Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa ! let him trot by.

[*Storm continues.*

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies.— Is man no more than this ? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume.— Ha ! here's three on's are sophisticated ! — Thou art the thing itself : unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings !— come, unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes.*

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented ; 'tis a naughty night to swim in.— Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart,— a small spark, all the rest on's body cold.— Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet : he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock ; he gives the web

and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Swithold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?

Enter GLOSTER *with a torch.*

Lear. What's he?
Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?
Glo. What are you there? Your names?
Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower.— Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!
Glo. What, hath your grace no better company?
Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it.
Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.
Glo. Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
T' obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.
Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.—
What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into th' house.
Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learnèd Theban.—
What is your study?
Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.
Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.
Kent. Impórtune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin t' unsettle.
Glo. Canst thou blame him?
His daughters seek his death: — ah, that good Kent!—
He said it would be thus,— poor banish'd man!—
Thou say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,
I'm almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I lov'd him, friend,
No father his son dearer: true to tell thee,
[*Storm continues.*
The grief hath craz'd my wits.— What a night's this!—
I do beseech your grace,—
Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.—
Noble philosopher, your company.
Edg. Tom's a-cold.
Glo. In, fellow, there, into th' hovel: keep thee warm.
Lear. Come, let's in all.
Kent. This way, my lord.
Lear. With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.
Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.
Glo. Take him you on.
Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.
Lear. Come, good Athenian.
Glo. No words, no words: hush.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came;
His word was still,— Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A room in* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter CORNWALL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.
Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reprovable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*aside*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persever in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter GLOSTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, *and* EDGAR.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience:—the gods reward your kindness!

[*Exit Gloster.*

Edg. Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness.—Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em,—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.—
[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learnèd justicer;—
[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here.—Now, you she-foxes!—

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares!—Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me:—

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first.—Bring in the evidence.—
[*To Edgar*] Thou robèd man of justice, take thy place;—
[*To the Fool*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side:—[*To Kent*] You are o' the commission,
Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first! 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honorable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on.— Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! — Corruption in the place! —
False justicer, why hast thou let her scape?
Edg. Bless thy five wits!
Kent. O pity! — Sir, where is the patience now
That you so oft have boasted to retain?
Edg. [*aside*] My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting.
Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.
Edg. Tom will throw his head at them.— Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,—
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns.— Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.
Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? — [*To Edgar*] You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.
Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.
Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so: we'll go to supper i' the morning: so, so, so.
Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend; where is the king my master?
Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not,— his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him.
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assurèd loss: take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.
Kent. Oppress'd nature sleeps: —
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure.— [*To the Fool*] Come, help to bear thy master;
Thou must not stay behind.
Glo. Come, come, away.
[*Exeunt Kent, Gloster, and the Fool, bearing off Lear.*
Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow,
He childed as I father'd! — Tom away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe scape the king!
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII. *A room in* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: — the army of France is landed.— Seek out the traitor Gloster. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*
Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure.— Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: — farewell, my Lord of Gloster.

Enter OSWALD.

How now! where's the king?

Osw. My Lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast
To have well-armèd friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

[*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*

Go, seek the traitor Gloster,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other Servants.*

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control.— Who's there? the traitor?

Re-enter Servants *with* GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glo. What mean your graces? — Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*

Reg. Hard, hard.— O filthy traitor!

Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Corn. To this chair bind him.— Villain, thou shalt find — [*Regan plucks his beard.*

Glo. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glo. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I'm your host.
With robbers' hands my hospitable favors
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.
Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?
Glo. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril —
Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him answer that.
Glo. I'm tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover?
Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up
And quench'd the stellèd fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said, "Good porter, turn the key,"
All cruels else subscrib'd: — but I shall see
The wingèd vengeance overtake such children.
Corn. See't shalt thou never. — Fellows, hold the chair. —
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.
Glo. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! — O cruel! — O you gods!
Reg. One side will mock another; th' other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance,—
First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I've serv'd you since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dog!
First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?
Corn. My villain! [*Draws.*
First Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
[*Draws. They fight. Cornwall is wounded.*
Reg. Give me thy sword.— A peasant stand up thus!
[*Takes a sword from another Servant, and runs at First Servant behind.*
First Serv. O, I am slain!— My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on them.— O! [*Dies.*
Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it.— Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy luster now?
Glo. All dark and comfortless.— Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us:
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glo. O my follies!
Then Edgar was abus'd.—
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.— How is't, my lord? how look you?
Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt:— follow me, lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain;— throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.— Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.
[*Exit Cornwall, led by Regan.— Some of the Servants unbind Gloster, and lead him out.*
Sec. Serv. I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.
Third Serv. If she live long

And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Sec. Serv. Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.
Third Serv. Go thou: I'll fetch come flax and whites of eggs
T' apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.— But who comes here?

Enter GLOSTER, *led by an* Old Man.

My father, poorly led? — World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.
Old Man. O, my good lord,
I've been your tenant, and your father's tenant,
These fourscore years.
Glo. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.
Old Man. You cannot see your way.
Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities— O dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abusèd father's wrath!

Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again!
Old Man. How now! Who's there?
Edg. [*aside*] O gods! Who is't can say, "I'm at the worst"?
I'm worse than e'er I was.
Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.
Edg. [*aside*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say "This is the worst."
Old Man. Fellow, where goest?
Glo. Is it a beggar-man?
Old Man. Madman and beggar too.
Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I've heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,—
They kill us for their sport.
Edg. [*aside*] How should this be? —
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow.
Angering itself and others.— Bless thee, master!
Glo. Is that the naked fellow?
Old Man. Ay, my lord.
Glo. Then, prithee, get thee gone: if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Which I'll entreat to lead me.
Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.
Glo. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.
Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*
Glo. Sirrah, naked fellow,—
Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.— [*Aside*] I cannot daub it further.
Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*aside*] And yet I must.— Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: — bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! — five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; and Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing,— who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master!

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier: — heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo success,
And each man have enough.— Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confinèd deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before the* Duke of ALBANY'S *palace.*

Enter GONERIL *and* EDMUND.

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.

Enter OSWALD.

Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was, "The worse:" of Gloster's treachery,

And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out: —
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. [*to Edm.*] Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you're like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a favor.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air: —
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloster!
[*Exit Edmund.*
O, the difference of man and man! To thee
A woman's services are due: my fool
Usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril!
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition:
That nature which contemns its origin
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither,
And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more; the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savor but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?

A father, and a gracious agèd man,
Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offenses,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honor from thy suffering; that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumèd helm thy slayer begins threats;
Whiles thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and criest
"Alack, why does he so?"

Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!

Alb. Thou changèd and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They're apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: — howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now!

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;

But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! — But, O poor Gloster!
Lost he his other eye?
Mess. Both, both, my lord.—
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.
Gon. [*aside*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way
The news is not so tart.— I'll read, and answer. [*Exit.*
Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?
Mess. Come with my lady hither.
Alb. He's not here.
Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.
Alb. Knows he the wickedness?
Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Alb. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes.— Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The French camp near Dover.*

Enter KENT *and a* Gentleman.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?
Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger, that his personal return was most required and necessary.
Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?
Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.
Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.
Kent. O, then it mov'd her.
Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better day: those happy smilets
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence
As pearls from diamonds dropt.— In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.
Kent. Made she no verbal question?
Gent. Faith, once or twice she heav'd the name of "father"
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried "Sisters, sisters!— Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
Let pity not be believ'd!"— There she shook
The holy-water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamor moisten'd: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.
Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?
Gent. No.
Kent. Was this before the king return'd?
Gent. No, since.
Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressèd Lear's i' the town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
Gent. Why, good sir?
Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters,— these things sting

His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?

Gent. 'Tis so they are a-foot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A tent.*

Enter CORDELIA, Doctor, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 'tis he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.— A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] — What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereavèd sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.

Doc. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! — Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.— O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A room in* GLOSTER'S *castle.*

Enter REGAN *and* OSWALD.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Osw. No, madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Osw. I know not, lady.
Reg. Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' the enemy.
Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.
Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.
Osw. I may not, madam:
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.
Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something — I know not what: — I'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.
Osw. Madam, I had rather —
Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband;
I'm sure of that: and at her late being here
She gave strange œilliads and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

Osw. I, madam?
Reg. I speak in understanding; you are, I know't:
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: — you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Osw. Would I could meet him, madam! I would show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The country near Dover.*

Enter GLOSTER, *and* EDGAR *dressed like a peasant.*

Glo. When shall I come to the top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labor.
Glo. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glo. No, truly.
Edg. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glo. So may it be, indeed:
Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
Edg. You're much deceiv'd: in nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.
Glo. Methinks you're better spoken.
Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place: — stand still.—
How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire,— dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,

Diminish'd to her cock,— her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight : the murmuring surge,
That on th' unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high.— I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.
Glo. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Give me your hand : — you're now within a foot
Of th' extreme verge : for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.
Glo. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse ; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking : fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee ! Go thou further off ;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.
Glo. With all my heart.
Edg. [*aside*] Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.
Glo. [*kneeling*] O you mighty gods !
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off :
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathèd part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him ! —
Now, fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone, sir : — farewell.
[*Gloster throws himself forward, and falls.*
[*Aside*] And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft : had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.— Alive or dead ?
Ho you, sir ! friend ! — Hear you, sir ! — speak ! —
[*Aside*] Thus might he pass indeed : — yet he revives.—
What are you, sir ?
Glo. Away, and let me die.
Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg : but thou dost breathe ;
Hast heavy substance ; bleed'st not ; speak'st ; art sound,
Ten masts at each make not the altitude

Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again.
Glo. But have I fall'n, or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; — the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Glo. Alack, I have no eyes.—
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm:
Up: — so.— How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.
Glo. Too well, too well.
Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?
Glo. A poor unfortunate beggar.
Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridgèd sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honors
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.
Glo. I do remember now: henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
"Enough, enough," and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say
"The fiend, the fiend:" he led me to that place.
Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts.— But who comes here?

Enter LEAR, *fantastically dressed with wild flowers.*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.
Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining; I am the king himself.
Edg. [*aside*] O thou side-piercing sight!
Lear. Nature's above art in that respect.— There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard.— Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace; — this piece of toasted cheese

will do't.— There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant. — Bring up the brown bills.— O, well flown, bird! — i' the clout, i' the clout: hewgh! — Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril, — with a white beard! — They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there.— To say "ay" and "no" to every thing that I said! — "Ay" and "no" too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words; they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie,— I am not ague-proof.

Glo. The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes!
I pardon that man's life.—What was thy cause? —
Adultery? —
Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloster's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To't, luxury, pell-mell! For I lack soldiers.—
Behold your simpering dame,
Whose face between her forks presages snow,
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name,—
The fitchew nor the soilèd horse goes to't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends';
There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consumption; — fie, fie, fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civit, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination: there's money for thee.

Glo. O, let me kiss that hand!
Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.
Glo. O ruin'd peace of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to naught.— Dost thou know me?
Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love.— Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.
Glo. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.
Edg. [*aside*] I would not take this from report;— it is,
And my heart breaks at it.
Lear. Read.
Glo. What, with the case of eyes?
Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.
Glo. I see it feelingly.
Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? — Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?
Glo. Ay, sir.
Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.—
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none,— I say, none; I'll able 'em:
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal th' accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem

To see the things thou dost not.— Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots: — harder, harder: — so.
Edg. [*aside*] O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness!
Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster:
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl and cry.— I will preach to thee: mark.
Glo. Alack, alack the day!
Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.— This' a good block: —
It were a delicate stratagem to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put't in proof;
And when I've stol'n upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter a Gentleman, *with* Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is: lay hand upon him.— Sir,
Your most dear daughter —
Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune.— Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have a surgeon;
I am cut to the brains.
Gent. You shall have any thing.
Lear. No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and for laying autumn's dust.
Gent. Good sir,—
Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial: come, come; I am a king;
My masters, know you that.
Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Lear. Then there's life in't. Nay, an you get it, you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.
[*Exit; Attendants follow.*
Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! — Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir.
Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will?
Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
Gent. Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.
Edg. But, by your favor,
How near's the other army?
Gent. Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.
Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.
Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.
Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*
Glo. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!
Edg. Well pray you, father.
Glo. Now, good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.
Glo. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes.— Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: — the sword is out
That must destroy thee.
Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it. [*Edgar interposes.*
Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that th' infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.
Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.
Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!
Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass An chud ha' been zwaggered out of my life,

'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near the old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder: chill be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir: come; no matter vor your foins. [*They fight, and Edgar knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me:—villain, take my purse:
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloster; seek him out
Upon the English party:—O, untimely death! [*Dies.*

Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Glo. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.—
Let's see his pockets: these letters that he speaks of
May be my friends.—He's dead; I'm only sorry
He had no other death's-man.—Let us see:—
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads*] "Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labor.

"Your — wife, so I would say — affectionate servant,
"GONERIL."

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange my brother! — Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers: and, in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practic'd duke: for him 'tis well
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glo. The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,

That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose
The knowledge of themselves.
Edg. Give me your hand:
[*Drum afar off*
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum:
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *A tent in the French camp.* LEAR *on a bed asleep, soft music playing;* Doctor, Gentleman, *and others attending.*

Enter CORDELIA *and* KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.
Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:
I prithee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be't so, my good lord.—[*To the Doctor*]
How does the king?
Doct. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abusèd nature!
Th' untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changèd father!
Doct. So please your majesty
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.
Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
Kent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. Very well.
Doct. Please you, draw near.— Louder the music there!
Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!
Kent. Kind and dear princess!
Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch — poor perdu! —
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.— He wakes; speak to him.
Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.
Cor. How does my royal lord? how fares your majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave: —
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cor. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?
Cor. Still, still, far wide!
Doct. He's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? — Fair daylight? —
I'm mightily abus'd.— I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus.— I know not what to say.—
I will not swear these are my hands: — let's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition!
Cor. O, look upon me, sir,

And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:—
No, sir, you must not kneel.
Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet 'tis danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Cor. Will't please your highness walk?
Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I'm old and foolish.
[*Exeunt all except Kent and Gentleman.*
Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?
Kent. Most certain, sir.
Gent. Who is conductor of his people?
Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloster.
Gent. They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.
Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be throughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The camp of the British forces, near Dover.*

Enter, with drum and colors, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, *and others.*

Edm. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course: he's full of alteration
And self-reproving: — bring his constant pleasure.
[*To an Officer, who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me,— but truly,— but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?

Edm. In honor'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honor, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not: —
She and the duke her husband!

Enter, with drum and colors, ALBANY, GONERIL, *and* Soldiers.

Gon. [*aside*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.—
Sir, this I hear,— the king is come to his daughter,

With others whom the rigor of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.
Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.
Reg. Why is this reason'd?
Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.
Alb. Let's, then, determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.
Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.
Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?
Gon. No.
Reg. 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.
Gon. [*aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle.— I will go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.
Alb. I'll overtake you.— Speak.
[*Exeunt all except Albany and Edgar.*
Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouchèd there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!
Alb. Stay till I've read the letter.
Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.
Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.
[*Exit Edgar.*

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces

By diligent discovery ; — but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.
Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*
Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love ;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?
Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive : to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now, then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle ; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,—
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon ; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A field between the two camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colors, LEAR CORDELIA, *and their* Forces ; *and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR *and* GLOSTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.
Glo. Grace go with you, sir ! [*Exit Edgar.*

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man,— give me thy hand,— away !
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand ; come on.
Glo. No further, sir ; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
Ripeness is all : — come on.
Glo. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The British camp, near Dover.*

Enter, in conquest, with drum and colors, EDMUND; LEAR *and* CORDELIA *prisoners;* Officers, Soldiers, *&c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
Cor. We are not the first
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressèd king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.—
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,—
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;—
And take upon 's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.
Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The goujeers shall devour them, flesh, and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep; we'll see 'em starve first.
Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*
Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note [*Giving a paper*]; go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes: know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword:— thy great employment

Will not bear question; either say thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.
Off. I'll do't, my lord.
Edm. About it; and write happy when thou hast done.
Mark,—I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.
Off. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If't be man's work, I'll do't. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers, *and* Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, t' appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness:—
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.
Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
Reg. That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.
Reg. In my rights
By me invested, he compeers the best.
Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.
Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.
Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach.—General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world that I create thee here
My lord and master.
Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?
Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. [*to Edmund*] Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason.—Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thy arrest,
This gilded serpent [*pointing to Gon*].—For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me;
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster:—let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy person
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*throwing down a glove*]; I'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.
Reg. Sick, O, sick!
Gon. [*aside*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.
Edm. There's my exchange [*throwing down a glove*]: what in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies :
Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not ? I will maintain
My truth and honor firmly.
Alb. A herald, ho !
Edm. A herald, ho, a herald !
Alb. Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.
Reg. My sickness grows upon me.
Alb. She is not well ; convey her to my tent.
[*Exit Regan, led.*

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald,— Let the trumpet sound,—
And read out this.
Off. Sound, trumpet ! [*A trumpet sounds.*
Her. [*reads*] " If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet : he is bold in his defense."
Edm. Sound ! [*First trumpet.*
Her. Again ! [*Second trumpet.*
Her. Again ! [*Third trumpet.*
[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *armed, and preceded by a trumpet.*

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.
Her. What are you ?
Your name, your quality ? and why you answer
This present summons ?
Edg. Know, my name is lost ;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit :
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.
Alb. Which is that adversary ?
Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund earl of Gloster ?
Edm. Himself : — what say'st thou to him ?
Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,

Thy arm may do thee justice : here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honors,
My oath, and my profession : I protest,—
Mauger thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valor and thy heart,— thou art a traitor ;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father ;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince ;
And, from th' extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou "no,"
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name ;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn :
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head ;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart ;
Which,— for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,—
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever.— Trumpets, speak !

[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*

Alb. Save him, save him !

Gon. This is practice, Gloster :
By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite ; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it : — Hold, sir ;
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil : —
No tearing, lady ; I perceive you know it.

[*Gives the letter to Edmund.*

Gon. Say, if I do,— the laws are mine, not thine :
Who can arraign me for't ?

Alb. Most monstrous !
Know'st thou this paper ?

Gon. Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.*

Alb. Go after her : she's desperate ; govern her.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*

Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I
done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'Tis past, and so am I.— But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.
Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness:— I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father!
Edg. Worthy prince,
I know't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord.— List a brief tale;—
And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst!—
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near,— O, our lives' sweetness!
That with the pain of death we'd hourly die
Rather than die at once!— taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never — O fault!— reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd,
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,
Alack, too weak the conflict to support,

'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.
Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.
Alb. If there be more, more woful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too-much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamor, came there a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father·
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear receiv'd: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman *hastily with a bloody knife.*

Gent. Help, help, O, help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means that bloody knife?
Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of — O, she's dead!
Alb. Who dead? speak, man.
Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poisonèd; she hath confess'd it.
Edm. I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.
Edg. Here comes Kent.
Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead: —

This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*

Enter KENT.

O, is this he?
The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.
Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night:
Is he not here?
Alb. Great thing of us forgot! —
Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's Cordelia?

[*The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.*

See'st thou this object, Kent?
Kent. Alack, why thus?
Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.
Alb. Even so.— Cover their faces.
Edm. I pant for life: — some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send —
Be brief in it — to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia: —
Nay, send in time.
Alb. Run, run, O, run!
Edg. To who, my lord? — Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.
Edm. Well thought on: take my sword;
Give it the captain.
Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.*
Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
Alb. The gods defend her! — Bear him hence awhile.

[*Edmund is borne off.*

Re-enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his arms;* EDGAR, Officer, *and others following.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! — O, you are men of stone:

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.— She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth.— Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Kent. Is this the promis'd end?
Edg. Or image of that horror?
Alb. Fall, and cease!
Lear. This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
Kent. O my good master! [*Kneeling.*
Lear. Prithee, away.
Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her; now she's gone forever!—
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st?— Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low,— an excellent thing in woman.—
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.
Off. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.
Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I've seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: — I'll tell you straight.
Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.
Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same,
Your servant Kent.—Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too: — he's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man,—
Lear. I'll see that straight.
Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You're welcome hither.
Kent. Nor no man else: — all's cheerless, dark, and deadly.—

Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.
Lear. Ay, so I think.
Alb. He knows not what he says; and vain is it
That we present us to him.
Edg. Very bootless.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.
Alb. That's but a trifle here.—
You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power:—[*To Edgar and Kent*] you, to your rights;
With boot, and such addition as your honors
Have more than merited.— All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.— O, see, see!
Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!—
Pray you, undo this button:—thank you, sir.—
Do you see this? Look on her,— look,— her lips,—
Look there, look there!— [*Dies.*
Edg. He faints!—My lord, my lord!—
Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!
Edg. Look up, my lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.
Edg. He is gone indeed.
Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long:
He but usurp'd his life.
Alb. Bear them from hence.—Our present business
Is general woe.—[*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of my soul, you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me,— I must not say no.
Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

CORIOLANUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS, a noble Roman.
TITUS LARTIUS, COMINIUS, } generals against the Volscians.
MENENIUS AGRIPPA, friend to Coriolanus.
SICINIUS VELUTUS, JUNIUS BRUTUS, } tribunes of the people.
Young MARCIUS, son to Coriolanus.
A Roman Herald.
TULLUS AUFIDIUS, general of the Volscians.
Lieutenant to Aufidius.
Conspirators with Aufidius.
A Citizen of Antium.
Two Volscian Guards.
VOLUMNIA, mother to Coriolanus.
VIRGILIA, wife to Coriolanus.
VALERIA, friend to Virgilia.
Gentlewoman attending on Virgilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants.

SCENE — *Partly Rome and its neighborhood; partly Corioli and its neighborhood; and partly Antium.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, *with staves, clubs, and other weapons.*

First Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

Citizens. Speak, speak.

First Cit. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish ?

Citizens. Resolved, resolved.

First Cit. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

Citizens. We know't, we know't.

First Cit. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

Citizens. No more talking on't; let it be done: away, away!

Sec. Cit. One word, good citizens,

First Cit. We are accounted poor citizens; the patricians, good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us: if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them.—Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

Sec. Cit. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

Citizens. Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty.

Sec. Cit. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

First Cit. Very well; and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

Sec. Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

Sec. Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

First Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol!

Citizens. Come, come.

First Cit. Soft! who comes here?

Sec. Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

First Cit. He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

Men. What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you
With bats and clubs? the matter? speak, I pray you.

First Cit. Our business is not unknown to the senate; they have had inkling, this fortnight, what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too.

Men. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbors,
Will you undo yourselves?

First Cit. We cannot, sir; we are undone already.

Men. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman state; whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever
Appear in your impediment: for the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians, make it; and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you; and you slander
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

First Cit. Care for us! True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet: — suffer us to famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain: make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich; and provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there's all the love they bear us.

Men. Either you must
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,
Or be accus'd of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale : it may be you have heard it;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale't a little more.

First Cit. Well, I'll hear it, sir : yet you must not think to fob-off our disgrace with a tale : but, an't please you, deliver.

Men. There was a time when all the body's members
Rebell'd against the belly ; thus accus'd it : —
That only like a gulf it did remain
I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
Like labor with the rest ; where th' other instruments
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd,—

First Cit. Well, sir,
What answer made the belly ?

Men. Sir, I shall tell you.— With a kind of smile,
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus —
For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak — it tauntingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt ; even so most fitly
As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you.

First Cit. Your belly's answer ? What !
The kingly-crownèd head, the vigilant eye,
The counselor heart, the arm our soldier,
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
In this our fabric, if that they —

Men. What then ? —
'Fore me, this fellow speaks ! — what then ? what then ?

First Cit. Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,
Who is the sink o' the body, —

Men. Well, what then ?

First Cit. The former agents, if they did complain,
What could the belly answer ?

Men. I will tell you;
If you'll bestow a small — of what you've little —
Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.
First Cit. Ye're long about it.
Men. Note me this, good friend,
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:
"True is it, my incorporate friends," quoth he,
"That I receive the general food at first,
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart,— to the seat o' the brain;
And, through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live: and though that all at once,
You, my good friends,"— this says the belly, mark me,—
First Cit. Ay, sir; well, well.
Men. "Though all at once can not
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran."— What say you to't?
First Cit. It was an answer: how apply you this?
Men. The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members: for, examine
Their counsels and their cares; digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
And no way from yourselves.— What do you think,—
You, the great toe of this assembly?
First Cit. I the great toe! why the great toe?
Men. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,
Lead'st first to win some vantage.—
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

·Hail, noble Marcius!

Mar. Thanks.—What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?

First Cit. We have ever your good word.

Mar. He that will give good words to ye will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is,
To make him worthy whose offense subdues him,
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favors swims with fins of lead,
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye!
With every minute you do change a mind;
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?—What's their seeking?

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,
The city is well stor'd.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say!
They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,
Who thrives, and who declines; side factions, and give out
Conjectural marriages; making parties strong,
And feebling such as stand not in their liking
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain enough!
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,

And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick my lance.
Men. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;
For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop?
Mar. They are dissolv'd: hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs,—
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only:—with these shreds
They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,
And a petition granted them, a strange one—
To break the heart of generosity,
And make bold power look pale—they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,
Shouting their emulation.
Men. What is granted them?
Mar. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath!
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time
Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.
Men. This is strange.
Mar. Go, get you home, you fragments!

Enter a Messenger, *hastily.*

Mess. Where's Caius Marcius?
Mar. Here: what's the matter?
Mess. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.
Mar. I'm glad on't; then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity.—See, our best elders.

Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators; JUNIUS BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS VELUTUS.

First Sen. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us,—
The Volsces are in arms.
Mar. They have a leader,

Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility ;
And were I any thing but what I am,
I'd wish me only he.
Com. You have fought together.
Mar. Were half to half the world by th' ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him : he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.
First Sen. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.
Com. It is your former promise.
Mar. Sir, it is ;
And I am constant.— Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff ? stand'st out ?
Tit. No, Caius Marcius ;
I'll lean upon one crutch, and fight with t'other,
Ere stay behind this business.
Men. O, true-bred !
First Sen. Your company to the Capitol ; where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.
Tit. [*to Com.*] Lead you on.—
[*To Mar.*] Follow Cominius : we must follow you ;
Right worthy you priority.
Com. Noble Marcius !
First Sen. [*to the Citizens*] Hence to your homes ; be gone !
Mar. Nay, let them follow :
The Volsces have much corn ; take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners.— Worshipful mutiners,
Your valor puts well forth : pray, follow.
[*Exeunt all except Brutus and Sicinius. The Citizens steal away.*
Sic. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius ?
Bru. He has no equal.
Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—
Bru. Mark'd you his lip and eyes ?
Sic. Nay, but his taunts.
Bru. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the gods.
Sic. Be-mock the modest moon.

Bru. The present wars devour him ! He is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.
Sic. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon : but I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.
Bru. Fame, at the which he aims,—
In whom already he's well grac'd,— can not
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first : for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To th' utmost of a man ; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius, "O, if he
Had borne the business !"
Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.
Bru. Come :
Half all Cominius' honors are to Marcius,
Though Marcius earn'd them not ; and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honors, though, indeed,
In aught he merit not.
Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the dispatch is made ; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.
Bru. Let's along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Corioli. The Senate-house.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *and certain* Senators.

First Sen. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels,
And know how we proceed.
Auf. Is it not yours ?
What ever hath been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention ? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence ; there are the words : I think
I have the letter here ; yes, here it is : [*Reads.*
"They have press'd a power, but it is not known
Whether for east or west : the dearth is great ;

The people mutinous : and it is so rumor'd,
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,—
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,—
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 'tis bent : most likely 'tis for you :
Consider of it."

First Sen. Our army's in the field :
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.

Auf. Nor did you think it folly
To keep your great pretenses veil'd till when
They needs must show themselves ; which in the hatching,
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shorten'd in our aim ; which was,
To take in many towns, ere, almost, Rome
Should know we were afoot.

Sec. Sen. Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission ; hie you to your bands :
Let us alone to guard Corioli :
If they set down before's, for the remove
Bring up your army ; but, I think, you'll find
They've not prepar'd for us.

Auf. O, doubt not that ;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your honors.
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us, we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you !

Auf. And keep your honors safe !

First Sen. Farewell.

Sec. Sen. Farewell.

All. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Rome. A room in* MARCIUS' *house.*

Enter VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA: *they sit down on two low stools, and sew.*

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing ; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort : if my son were my husband, I

should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honor than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied, and the only son of my womb; when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding; I — considering how honor would become such a person; that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir — was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam, — how then?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely, had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather have eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Gent. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.
Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum;
I see him pluck Aufidius down by th' hair;
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him:
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus,—
"Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome:" his bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
Like to a harvest-man, that's task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

Vol. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man
Than gilt his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood

At Grecian swords, contemning.— Tell Valeria
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit Gent.*
Vir. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!
Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

Re-enter Gentlewoman *with* VALERIA *and her* Usher.

Val. My ladies both, good day to you.
Vol. Sweet madam.
Vir. I am glad to see your ladyship.
Val. How do you both? you are manifest house-keepers.
What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good faith.— How does your little son?
Vir. I thank your ladyship, well, good madam.
Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.
Val. O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: 'has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again: and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; catched it again: or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth, and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammocked it!
Vol. One on's father's moods.
Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.
Vol. A crack, madam.
Val. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.
Vir. No, good madam; I will not out of doors.
Val. Not out of doors!
Vol. She shall, she shall.
Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.
Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.
Vir. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.
Vol. Why, I pray you?
Vir. 'Tis not to save labor, nor that I want love.

Val. You would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

Vir. Indeed, madam?

Val. In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is:—The Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honor; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

Vol. Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

Val. In troth, I think she would.— Fare you well, then.— Come, good sweet lady.— Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

Vir. No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

Val. Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Before Corioli.*

Enter, with drum and colors, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Officers, *and* Soldiers.

Mar. Yonder comes news:—a wager they have met.

Lart. My horse to yours, no.

Mar. 'Tis done.

Lart. Agreed.

Enter a Messenger.

Mar. Say, has our general met the enemy?

Mess. They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

Lart. So, the good horse is mine.
Mar. I'll buy him of you.
Lart. No, I'll nor sell nor give him; lend you him I will
For half a hundred years.— Summon the town.
Mar. How far off lie these armies?
Mess. Within this mile and half.
Mar. Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.—
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,
To help our fielded friends! — Come, blow thy blast.

They sound a parley. Enter, on the walls, some Senators *and others.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?
First Sen. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*] Hark, our drums
Are bringing forth our youth! we'll break our walls,
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*] Hark you, far off!
There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes
Amongst your cloven army.
Mar. O, they're at it!
Lart. Their noise be our instruction.— Ladders, ho!

The Volsces *enter and pass over.*

Mar. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields.—Advance, brave Titus:
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath.— Come on, my fellows:
He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge.

Alarum; and exeunt Romans *and* Volsces, *fighting. The* Romans *are beaten back to their trenches.*

Re-enter MARCIUS.

Mar. All the contagion of the south light on you,

You shames of Rome! you herd of — Boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er; that you may be abhorr'd
Further than seen, and one infect another
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agu'd fear! Mend, and charge home,
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe,
And make my wars on you: look to't: come on;
If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches. Follow me.

Another alarum. The Volsces *and* Romans *re-enter, and the fight is renewed. The* Volsces *retire into Corioli, and* MARCIUS *follows them to the gates.*

So, now the gates are ope: — now prove good seconds:
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like.
[*Enters the gates.*

First Sol. Fool-hardiness; not I.
Sec. Sol. Nor I.
[*Marcius is shut in.*
First Sol. See, they have shut him in.
All. To the pot, I warrant him.
[*Alarum continues.*

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lart. What is become of Marcius?
All. Slain, sir, doubtless.
First Sol. Following the fliers at the very heels,
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,
Clapp'd-to their gates: he is himself alone,
To answer all the city.
Lart. O noble fellow!
Who, sensible, outdares his senseless sword,
And, when it bows, stands up! Thou art lost, Marcius:
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,

Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, *bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.*

First Sol. Look, sir.
Lart. O, 'tis Marcius!
Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.
[*They fight, and all enter the city.*

SCENE V. *Within Corioli. A street.*

Enter certain Romans, *with spoils.*

First Rom. This will I carry to Rome.
Sec Rom. And I this.
Third Rom. A murrain on't! I took this for silver.
[*Alarum continues still afar off.*

Enter MARCIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS *with a trumpet.*

Mar. See here these movers that do prize their hours
At a crack'd drachm! Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up: — down with them! —
And hark, what noise the general makes! — To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city;
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.
Lart. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent for
A second course of fight.
Mar. Sir, praise me not;
My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well:
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear, and fight.
Lart. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!
Mar. Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest! So, farewell.
Lart. Thou worthiest Marcius! — [*Exit Marcius.*

Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place;
Call thither all the officers o' the town,
Where they shall know our mind: away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Near the camp of* COMINIUS.

Enter COMINIUS *and Forces, retreating.*

Com. Breathe you, my friends: well fought; we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,
We shall be charg'd again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we've heard
The charges of our friends.— Ye Roman gods,
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,
May give you thankful sacrifice!

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news?
Mess. The citizens of Corioli have issu'd,
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.
Com. Though thou speak'st truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since?
Mess. Above an hour, my lord.
Com. 'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their drums:
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
And bring thy news so late?
Mess. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.
Com. Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have
Before-time seen him thus.
Mar. [*within*] Come I too late?
Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor,
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man's.

Enter MARCIUS.

Mar. Come I too late?
Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.
Mar. O, let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward!
Com. Flower of warriors,
How is't with Titus Lartius?
Mar. As with a man busied about decrees:
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him or pitying, threatening th' other;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.
Com. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he? call him hither.
Mar. Let him alone;
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,
The common file — a plague! — tribunes for them! —
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.
Com. But how prevail'd you?
Mar. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think.
Where is the enemy? are you lords o' the field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?
Com. Marcius,
We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire, to win our purpose.
Mar. How lies their battle? know you on which side
They've plac'd their men of trust?
Com. As I guess, Marcius,
Their bands i' the vawward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.
Mar. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By the blood we've shed together, by the vows
We've made to endure friends, that you directly

Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates,
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanc'd and darts,
We prove this very hour.
Com. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath,
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking: take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.
Mar. Those are they
That most are willing.— If any such be here —
As it were sin to doubt — that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, t' express his disposition,
And follow Marcius.
[*They all shout, and wave their swords; take him up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*
O, me alone! make you a sword of me?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? none of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;
And four shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclin'd.
Com. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The gates of Corioli.*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum and trumpet toward* COMINIUS *and* CAIUS MARCIUS, *enters with a* Lieutenant, *a party of* Soldiers, *and a* Scout.

Lart. So, let the ports be guarded: keep your duties,
As I've set them down. If I do send, dispatch

Those centuries to our aid ; the rest will serve
For a short holding : if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.
Lieu. Fear not our care, sir.
Lart. Hence, and shut your gates upon's.—
Our guider, come ; to the Roman camp conduct us.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *A field of battle between the Roman and the Volscian camps.*

Alarum. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Mar. I'll fight with none but thee ; for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.
Auf. We hate alike :
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame I envy. Fix thy foot.
Mar. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
And the gods doom him after !
Auf. If I fly, Marcius,
Halloo me like a hare.
Mar. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
And made what work I pleas'd : 'tis not my blood
Wherein thou seest me mask'd ; for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.
Auf. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,
Thou shouldst not scape me here.
[*They fight, and certain Volsces come to the aid of Aufidius.*
Officious, and not valiant,— you have sham'd me
In your condemnèd seconds.
[*Exeunt fighting, driven in by Marcius.*

SCENE IX. *The Roman camp.*

Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, from one side, COMINIUS *and* Romans ; *from the other side,* MARCIUS, *with his arm in a scarf, and other* Romans.

Com. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou'lt not believe thy deeds : but I'll report it,

Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
Where great patricians shall attend, and shrug,
I' th' end admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
And, gladly quak'd, hear more; where the dull tribunes,
That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honors,
Shall say, against their hearts, "We thank the gods
Our Rome hath such a soldier!"
Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast,
Having fully din'd before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit.*

Lart. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison:
Hadst thou beheld —
Mar. Pray now, no more: my mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done
As you have done,— that's what I can; induc'd
As you have been,— that's for my country:
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.
Com. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know
The value of her own: 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings; and to silence that,
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest: therefore, I beseech you —
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done — before our army hear me.
Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves remember'd.
Com. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,—
Whereof we've ta'en good, and good store,— of all
The treasure in this field achiev'd and city,
We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distribution, at
Your only choice.
Mar. I thank you, general;

But can not make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword: I do refuse it;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing.

[*A long flourish. They all cry,* "Marcius! Marcius!" *cast up their caps and lances: Cominius and Lartius stand bare.*

May these same instruments, which you profane,
Never sound more! When drums and trumpets shall
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-fac'd soothing! When steel grows
Soft as the parasite's silk, let him be made
A coverture for the wars! No more, I say!
For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,
Or foil'd some debile wretch,— which, without note,
Here's many else have done,— you shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
In praises sauc'd with lies.

Com. Too modest are you;
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly: by your patience,
If 'gainst yourself you be incens'd, we'll put you —
Like one that means his proper harm — in manacles,
Then reason safely with you.— Therefore, be't known,
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,
For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all th' applause and clamor of the host,
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.— Bear
Th' addition nobly ever!

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound and drums.*

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

Cor. I will go wash;
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no: howbeit, I thank you: —
I mean to stride your steed; and at all times,
To undercrest your good addition
To the fairness of my power.

Com. So, to our tent;
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success.— You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate,
For their own good and ours.
Lart. I shall, my lord.
Cor. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.
Com. Take't; 'tis yours. What is't?
Cor. I sometime lay, here in Corioli,
At a poor man's house; he us'd me kindly:—
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you
To give my poor host freedom.
Com. O, well begg'd!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind.— Deliver him, Titus.
Lart. Marcius, his name?
Cor. By Jupiter, forgot:—
I'm weary; yea, my memory is tir'd.—
Have we no wine here?
Com. Go we to our tent:
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
It should be look'd to: come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X. *The camp of the* Volsces.

A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *bloody, with two or three* Soldiers.

Auf. The town is ta'en!
First Sol. 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.
Auf. Condition!—
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am.— Condition!
What good condition can a treaty find
I' the part that is at mercy?— Five times, Marcius,
I've fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me;
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat.— By th' elements,
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,

He's mine, or I am his: mine emulation
Hath not that honor in't it had; for where
I thought to crush him in an equal force
True sword to sword, I'll poach at him some way,
Or wrath or craft may get him.

First Sol. He's the devil.

Auf. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valor, poison'd
With only suffering stain by him, for him
Shall fly out of itself: nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick; nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to the city;
Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

First Sol. Will not you go?

Auf. I am attended at the cypress grove: I pray you —
'Tis south the city mills — bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

First Sol. I shall, sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, *and* BRUTUS.

Men. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

Bru. Good or bad?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, who does the wolf love?

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him; as the humble plebeians would the noble Marcius.

Bru. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

Men. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

Sic. Especially in pride.

Bru. And topping all others in boasting.

Men. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you?

Both. Why, how are we censured?

Men. Because you talk of pride now,—will you not be angry?

Both. Well, well, sir, well.

Men. Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect in favoring the first complaint, hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning: what I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are,—I cannot call you Lycurguses,—if the drink you give me touch my

palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables : and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? what harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

Bru. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers; set up the bloody flag against all patience; and, in roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honorable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your worships: more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you. [*Brutus and Sicinius retire.*

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* VALERIA, *with* Attendants.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies,—and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler,— whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honorable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation,

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee.— Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vir., Val. Nay, 'tis true.

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to-night: —a letter for me!

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw't.

Men. A letter for me! it gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricutic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench.— Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded,— I thank the gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much:—brings 'a victory in his pocket?—the wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows: Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes,—they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

Men. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had stayed by him, I would not have been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this?

Vol. Good ladies, let's go.— Yes, yes, yes; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the

whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The gods grant them true!

Vol. True! pow, wow.

Men. True! I'll be sworn they are true.— Where is he wounded? — [*To the Tribunes*] God save your good worships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud.— Where is he wounded?

Vol. I' the shoulder and i' the left arm: there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body.

Men. One i' the neck and two i' the thigh,— there's nine that I know.

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish within.*] Hark! the trumpets.

Vol. These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears:
Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie;
Which, being advanc'd, declines, and then men die.

A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS; *between them* CORIOLANUS, *crowned with an oaken garland; with* Captains, Soldiers, *and a* Herald.

Her. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates: where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these
In honor follows Coriolanus: — welcome,
Welcome to Rome, renown'd Coriolanus! [*Flourish.*

All. Welcome to Rome, renown'd Coriolanus!

Cor. No more of this, it does offend my heart;
Pray now, no more.

Com. Look, sir, your mother!

Cor. O,
You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
For my prosperity. [*Kneels.*

Vol. [*raising him*] Nay, my good soldier, up;
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honor newly nam'd,—
What is it? — Coriolanus must I call thee? —
But, O, thy wife!

Cor. My gracious silence, hail!
Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

Men. Now, the gods crown thee!

Cor. And live you yet? — [*To Valeria*] O my sweet lady, pardon.

Vol. I know not where to turn: — O, welcome home; —
And welcome, general; and ye're welcome all.

Men. A hundred thousand welcomes: — I could weep,
And I could laugh; I'm light and heavy: — welcome:
A curse begin at very root on's heart
That is not glad to see thee! — You are three
That Rome should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,
We've some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors:
We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

Com. Ever right.

Cor. Menenius ever, ever.

Her. Give way there, and go on!

Cor. [*to Vol. and Vir.*] Your hand, and yours:
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited;
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings,
But with them charge of honors.

Vol. I have liv'd
To see inherited my very wishes,
And the buildings of my fancy; only there
Is one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Cor. Know, good mother,

I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.
Com. On, to the Capitol.
[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before.*
[*Brutus and Sicinius come forward.*
Bru. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry
While she chats him: the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clambering the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges hors'd
With variable complexions; all agreeing
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station: our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask, in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks, to the wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses: such a pother,
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slyly crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.
Sic. On the sudden,
I warrant him consul.
Bru. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.
Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honors
From where he should begin and end; but will
Lose those he hath won.
Bru. In that there's comfort.
Sic. Doubt not
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they,
Upon their ancient malice, will forget,
With the least cause, these his new honors; which
That he will give them make I as little question
As he is proud to do't.
Bru. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he
Appear i' the market-place, nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility;
Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

Sic. 'Tis right.
Bru. It was his word: O, he would miss it, rather
Than carry't but by the suit of the gentry to him,
And the desire of the nobles.
Sic. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.
Bru. 'Tis most like he will.
Sic. It shall be to him, then, as our good wills,
A sure destruction,
Bru. So it must fall out
To him or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them; that to's power he would
Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and
Dispropertied their freedoms; holding them,
In human action and capacity,
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
Than camels in the war; who have their provand
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.
Sic. This, as you say, suggested
At some time when his roaring insolence
Shall touch the people,— which time shall not want,
If he be put upon't; and that's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep,— will be his fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

Bru. What's the matter?
Mess. You're sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
That Marcius shall be consul:
I've seen the dumb men throng to see him, and
The blind to hear him speak: matrons flung gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,
Upon him as he pass'd: the nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue; and the commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:
I never saw the like.
Bru. Let's to the Capitol;

And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
But hearts for the event.

Sic. Have with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. The Capitol.*

Enter two Officers, *to lay cushions.*

First Off. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships ?

Sec. Off. Three, they say : but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

First Off. That's a brave fellow ; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

Sec. Off. Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them ; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore : so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground : therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition ; and, out of his noble carelessness, lets them plainly see't.

First Off. If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm : but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him ; and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes,— to flatter them for their love.

Sec. Off. He hath deserved worthily of his country : and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to heave them at all into their estimation and report : but he hath so planted his honors in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury ; to report otherwise, were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

First Off. No more of him ; he's a worthy man : make way, they are coming.

A sennet. Enter, with Lictors *before them,* COMINIUS, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators, SICINIUS, *and* BRUTUS. *The* Senators *take their places ; the* Tribunes *take theirs also by themselves.*

Men. Having determin'd of the Volsces, and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country ; therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus ; whom
We meet here, both to thank, and to remember
With honors like himself.

First Sen. Speak, good Cominius :
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out.—[*To the Tribunes*] Masters o' the people,
We do request your kindest ears ; and, after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.

Sic. We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty ; and have hearts
Inclinable to honor and advance
The theme of our assembly.

Bru. Which the rather
We shall be blest to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto priz'd them at.

Men. That's off, that's off ;
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak ?

Bru. Most willingly :
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.

Men. He loves your people ;
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.—

Worthy Cominius, speak.—[*Coriolanus rises, and offers to go away.*] Nay, keep your place.

First Sen. Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

Cor. Your honors' pardon:
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
Than hear say how I got them.

Bru. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.

Cor. No, sir: yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You sooth'd not, therefore hurt not: but your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Men. Pray now, sit down.

Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun,
When the alarm were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit.*

Men. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter —
That's thousand to one good one — when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honor
Than one on's ears to hear't? — proceed, Cominius.

Com. I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be utter'd feebly.— It is held
That valor is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman, and i' the consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,
He prov'd best man i' the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil-age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxèd like a sea;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,

Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers;
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was tim'd with dying cries: alone he enter'd
The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
Corioli like a planet: now all's his:
When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil: and till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man!

First Sen. He cannot but with measure fit the honors
Which we devise him.

Com. Our spoils he kick'd at;
And look'd upon things precious as they were
The common muck of the world: he covets less
Than misery itself would give; rewards
His deeds with doing them; and is content
To spend the time to end it.

Men. He's right noble:
Let him be call'd for.

First Sen. Call Coriolanus.

Off. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

Men. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd
To make thee consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
My life and services.

Men. It then remains
That you do speak to the people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you
That I may pass this doing.
Sic. Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.
Men. Put them not to't:—
Pray you, go fit you to the custom; and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honor with your form.
Cor. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.
Bru. [*to Sic.*] Mark you that?
Cor. To brag unto them,— thus I did, and thus;—
Show them th' unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only!—
Men. Do not stand upon't.—
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them;—and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honor.
Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and honor!
[*Flourish. Exeunt all except Brutus and Sicinius.*
Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.
Sic. May they perceive's intent! He will require them,
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.
Bru. Come, we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here: on the market-place
I know they do attend us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.*

Enter several Citizens.

First Cit. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.
Sec. Cit. We may, sir, if we will.
Third Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do: for if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our

tongues into those wounds, and speak for them ; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous : and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude ; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

First Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve ; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

Third Cit. We have been called so of many ; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely colored : and truly I think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south ; and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

Sec. Cit. Think you so ? Which way do you judge my wit would fly ?

Third Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will,— 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head ; but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

Sec. Cit. Why that way ?

Third Cit. To lose itself in a fog ; where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife.

Sec. Cit. You are never without your tricks : — you may, you may.

Third Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices ? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.— Here he comes, and in the gown of humility : mark his behavior. We are not to stay altogether, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars ; wherein every one of us has a single honor, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues : therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* MENENIUS.

Men. O sir, you are not right : have you not known
The worthiest men have done't ?

Cor. What must I say?—
"I pray, sir,"— Plague upon't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace:—"Look, sir;— my wounds;—
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From the noise of our own drums."
Men. O me, the gods!
You must not speak of that: you must desire them
To think upon you.
Cor. Think upon me! hang 'em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.
Men. You'll mar all:
I'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner.
Cor. Bid them wash their faces,
And keep their teeth clean. [*Exit Menenius.*]— So, here comes a brace.

Re-enter two Citizens.

You know the cause, sirs, of my standing here.
First Cit. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to't.
Cor. Mine own desert.
Sec Cit. Your own desert?
Cor. Ay, not mine own desire.
First Cit. How! not your own desire!
Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.
First Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.
Cor. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consulship?
First Cit. The price is, to ask it kindly.
Cor. Kindly! Sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private.— Your good voice, sir; what say you?
Sec. Cit. You shall ha't, worthy sir.
Cor. A match, sir.— There's in all two worthy voices begged.— I have your alms: adieu.
First Cit. But this is something odd.
Sec Cit. An 'twere to give again,— but 'tis no matter.
[*Exeunt the two Citizens.*

Re-enter two other Citizens.

Cor. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

Third Cit. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Cor. Your enigma?

Third Cit. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not, indeed, loved the common people.

Cor. You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle: and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practice the insinuating nod, and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you I may be consul.

Fourth Cit. We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

Third Cit. You have received many wounds for your country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily!

[*Exeunt.*

Cor. Most sweet voices! —
Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this woolless toge should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to't: —
What custom wills, in all things should we do't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth t' o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,
Let the high office and the honor go
To one that would do thus.— I am half through:

The one part suffer'd, th' other will I do.—
Here come more voices.

Re-enter three other Citizens.

Your voices: for your voices I have fought;
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six
I've seen, and heard of; for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more: your voices:
Indeed, I would be consul.

Fifth Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

Sixth Cit. Therefore let him be consul: the gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

All three Citizens. Amen, amen.—God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt.*

Cor. Worthy voices!

Re-enter MENENIUS, *with* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS.

Men. You've stood your limitation; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice: remains
That, in th' official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharg'd:
The people do admit you; and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where? at the senate-house?

Sic. There, Coriolanus.

Cor. May I, then, change these garments?

Sic. You may, sir.

Cor. That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to the senate-house.

Men. I'll keep you company.—Will you along?

Bru. We stay here for the people.

Sic. Fare you well.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Menenius.*

He has it now; and, by his looks, methinks
'Tis warm at's heart.

Bru. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds.—Will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter Citizens.

Sic. How now, my masters! have you chose this man?
First Cit. He has our voices, sir.
Bru. We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.
Sec. Cit. Amen, sir: — to my poor unworthy notion,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.
Third Cit. Certainly
He flouted us downright.
First Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech,— he did not mock us.
Sec. Cit. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He us'd us scornfully; he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for's country.
Sic. Why, so he did, I'm sure.
All the Citizens. No, no; no man saw 'em.
Third Cit. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
"I would be consul," says he; "agèd custom
But by your voices will not so permit me;
Your voices therefore:" when we granted that,
Here was, "I thank you for your voices,— thank you,—
Your most sweet voices: — now you have left your voices,
I have no further with you:" — was not this mockery?
Sic. Why, either were you ignorant to see't?
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?
Bru. Could you not have told him,
As you were lesson'd,— when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy; ever spake against
Your liberties, and the charters that you bear
I' the body of the weal; and now, arriving
A place of potency, and sway o' the state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said,
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices, and

Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.
Sic. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught; so, putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en th' advantage of his choler,
And pass'd him unelected.
Bru. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt,
When he did need your loves; and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment?
Sic. Have you,
Ere now, denied the asker? and now again,
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your su'd-for tongues?
Third Cit. He's not confirm'd; we may
Deny him yet.
Sec. Cit. And will deny him; I
Will have five hundred voices of that sound.
First Cit. I twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.
Bru. Get you hence instantly; and tell those friends
They've chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.
Sic. Let them assemble;
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election: enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you: besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed;
How in his suit he scorn'd you; but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,

Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After th' inveterate hate he bears you.
Bru. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes; that we labor'd,
No impediment between, but that you must
Cast your election on him.
Sic. Say you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections; and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul: lay the fault on us.
Bru. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you.
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continu'd; and what stock he springs of,—
The noble house o' the Marcians; from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
And Censorinus, who was nobly nam'd so,
Twice being by the people chosen censor,
Was his great ancestor.
Sic. One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances; but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he's your fixèd enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.
Bru. Say you ne'er had done't —
Harp on that still — but by our putting on:
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.
All the Citizens. We will so: almost all
Repent in their election. [*Exeunt.*
Bru. Let them go on;
This mutiny were better put in hazard,
Than stay, past doubt, for greater:
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.

Sic. To the Capitol, come:
We will be there before the stream o' the people;
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius, then, had made new head?
Lart. He had, my lord; and that it was which caus'd
Our swifter composition.
Cor. So, then, the Volsces stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon's again.
Com. They're worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.
Cor. Saw you Aufidius?
Lart. On safe-guard he came to me; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town: he is retir'd to Antium.
Cor. Spoke he of me?
Lart. He did, my lord.
Cor. How? what?
Lart. How often he had met you, sword to sword;
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.
Cor. At Antium lives he?
Lart. At Antium.
Cor. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
T' oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth: I do despise them;
For they do prank them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance.

Sic. Pass no further.
Cor. Ha! what is that?
Bru. It will be dangerous to go on: no further.
Cor. What makes this change?
Men. The matter?
Com. Hath he not pass'd the nobles and the commons?
Bru. Cominius, no.
Cor. Have I had children's voices?
First Sen. Tribunes, give way; he shall to the market-place.
Bru. The people are incens'd against him.
Sic. Stop,
Or all will fall in broil.
Cor. Are these your herd? —
Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues? — What are your offices?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?
Men. Be calm, be calm.
Cor. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility:
Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule,
Nor ever will be rul'd.
Bru. Call't not a plot:
The people cry you mock'd them; and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repin'd;
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people,— call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.
Cor. Why, this was known before.
Bru. Not to them all.
Cor. Have you inform'd them sithence?
Bru. How! I inform them!
Cor. You're like to do such business.
Bru. Not unlike,
Each way, to better yours.
Cor. Why, then, should I be consul? By yond clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.
Sic. You show too much of that
For which the people stir: if you will pass
To where you're bound, you must inquire your way,

Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Men. Let's be calm.

Com. The people are abus'd; set on. This paltering
Becomes not Rome; nor has Coriolanus
Deserv'd this so dishonor'd rub, laid falsely
I' the plain way of his merit.

Cor. Tell me of corn!
This was my speech, and I will speak't again,—

Men. Not now, not now.

First Sen. Not in this heat, sir, now.

Cor. Now, as I live, I will.— My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons:—
For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves: I say again,
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have plow'd for, sow'd, and scatter'd,
By mingling them with us, the honor'd number;
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that
Which they have given to beggars.

Men. Well, no more.

First Sen. No more words, we beseech you.

Cor. How! no more!
As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay against those measles,
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

Bru. You speak o' the people,
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.

Sic. 'Twere well
We let the people know't.

Men. What, what? his choler?

Cor. Choler!
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind!

Sic. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.
Cor. Shall remain!—
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you
His absolute "shall"?
Com. 'Twas from the canon.
Cor. "Shall"!
O good, but most unwise patricians! why,
You grave, but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra heart to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory "shall," being but
The horn and noise o' the monster, wants not spirit
To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then vail your ignorance; if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate;
And such a one as he, who puts his "shall,"
His popular "shall," against a graver bench
Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself,
It makes the consuls base! and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by th' other.
Com. Well,—on to the market-place.
Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas us'd
Sometime in Greece,—
Men. Well, well, no more of that.
Cor. Though there the people had more absolute power,—
I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.
Bru. Why, shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?

Cor. I'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense, resting well assur'd
They ne'er did service for't: being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates: — this kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis: being i' the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valor, spoke not for them: th' accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the motive
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bisson multitude digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words: — "We did request it;
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands:" — thus we debase
The nature of our seats, and make the rabble
Call our cares fears; which will in time break ope
The locks o' the senate, and bring in the crows
To peck the eagles.
Men. Come, enough.
Bru. Enough, with over-measure.
Cor. No, take more:
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! — This double worship, —
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason; where gentry, title, wisdom,
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance, — it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
T' unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd, it follows,
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you, —
You that will be less fearful than discreet;
That love the fundamental part of state
More than you doubt the change on't; that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To imp a body with a dangerous physic
That's sure of death without it, — at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison: your dishonor
Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state

Of that integrity which should become't ;
Not having the power to do the good it would,
For th' ill which doth control't.
Bru. 'Has said enough.
Sic. 'Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.
Cor. Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee ! —
What should the people do with these bald tribunes ?
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To the greater bench : in a rebellion,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen : in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' the dust.
Bru. Manifest treason !
Sic. This a consul ? no.
Bru. The ædiles, ho !

Enter an Ædile.

Let him be apprehended.
Sic. Go, call the people [*Exit Ædile*] : — in whose name myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to the public weal : obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.
Cor. Hence, old goat !
Sen. and Pat. We'll surety him.
Com. Agèd sir, hands off.
Cor. Hence, rotten thing ! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.
Sic. Help, ye citizens !

Enter a rabble of Citizens, *with the* Ædiles.

Men. On both sides more respect.
Sic. Here's he that would take from you all your power.
Bru. Seize him, ædiles !
Citizens. Down with him ! down with him !
Sen., Pat., &c. Weapons, weapons, weapons!

[*They all bustle about Coriolanus.*

Tribunes ! — Patricians ! — Citizens ! — What, ho ! —
Sicinius ! — Brutus ! — Coriolanus ! — Citizens ! —
Peace, peace, peace ! — Stay, hold, peace !

Men. What is about to be? — I'm out of breath;
Confusion's near; I cannot speak.— You, tribunes,
Speak to the people: — Coriolanus, patience: —
Speak, good Sicinius.
Sic. Hear me, people; peace!
Citizens. Let's hear our tribune: peace!— Speak, speak
Sic. You are at point to lose your liberties:
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,
Whom late you have nam'd for consul.
Men. Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.
First Sen. T' unbuild the city, and to lay all flat.
Sic. What is the city but the people?
Citizens. True,
The people are the city.
Bru. By the consent of all, we were establish'd
The people's magistrates.
Citizens. You so remain.
Men. And so are like to do.
Cor. That is the way to lay the city flat;
To bring the roof to the foundation,
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
In heaps and piles of ruin.
Sic. This deserves death.
Bru. Or let us stand to our authority,
Or let us lose it.— We do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
Of present death.
Sic. Therefore lay hold of him;
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.
Bru. Ædiles, seize him!
Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield!
Men. Hear me one word:
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.
Ed. Peace, peace!
Men. Be that you seem, truly your country's friends,
And temperately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.
Bru. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous

Where the disease is violent.— Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.

Cor. No, I'll die here. [*Drawing his sword.*
There's some among you have beheld me fighting:
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

Men. Down with that sword! — Tribunes, withdraw awhile.

Bru. Lay hands upon him.

Men. Help, help Marcius, help,
You that be noble; help him, young and old!

Citizens. Down with him! down with him!

[*In this mutiny the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and the People are beat in.*

Men. Go, get you to your house; be gone, away!
All will be naught else.

Sec. Sen. Get you gone.

Cor. Stand fast;
We have as many friends as enemies.

Men. Shall it be put to that?

First Sen. The gods forbid! —
I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;
Leave us to cure this cause.

Men. For 'tis a sore upon us,
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. I would they were barbarians, as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd; not Romans, as they are not,
Though calv'd i' the porch o' the Capitol —

Men. Be gone;
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;
One time will owe another.

Cor. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.

Men. I could myself
Take up a brace o' the best of them; yea, the two tribunes.

Com. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands
Against a falling fabric.— Will you hence,
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are us'd to bear.

Men. Pray you, be gone :
I'll try whether my old wit be in request
With those that have but little : this must be patch'd
With cloth of any color.
Com. Nay, come away.
[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, and others.*
First Pat. This man has marr'd his fortune.
Men. His nature is too noble for the world :
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent ;
And, being angry, does forget that ever
He heard the name of death.— [*A noise within.*
Here's goodly work !
Sec. Pat. I would they were a-bed !
Men. I would they were in Tiber ! What, the vengeance,
Could he not speak 'em fair ?

Re-enter BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS, *with the rabble.*

Sic. Where is this viper,
That would depopulate the city, and
Be every man himself ?
Men. You worthy tribunes,—
Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands; he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power,
Which he so sets at naught.
First Cit. He shall well know
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.
Citizens. He shall, sure on't.
Men. Sir, sir,—
Sic. Peace !
Men. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.
Sic. Sir, how comes't that you
Have holp to make this rescue ?
Men. Hear me speak : —
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults,—
Sic. Consul ! — what consul ?

Men. The consul Coriolanus.
Bru. He consul!
Citizens. No, no, no, no, no.
Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I'd crave a word or two;
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.
Sic. Speak briefly, then;
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence
Were but our danger; and to keep him here
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.
Men. Now the good gods forbid
That our renownèd Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deservèd children is enroll'd
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!
Sic. He's a disease that must be cut away.
Men. O, he's a limb that has but a disease;
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost—
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,
By many an ounce—he dropp'd it for his country;
And what is left, to lose it by his country,
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,
A brand to th' end o' the world.
Sic. This is clean kam.
Bru. Merely awry: when he did love his country,
It honor'd him.
Men. The service of the foot
Being once gangren'd, is not then respected
For what before it was.
Bru. We'll hear no more.—
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.
Men. One word more, one word.
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will, too late,
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process;

Lest parties — as he is belov'd — break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.
Bru. If it were so,—
Sic. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? — Come, –
Men. Consider this: — he has been bred i' the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bolted language; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,—
In peace,— to his utmost peril.
First Sen. Noble tribunes,
It is the humane way: the other course
Will prove too bloody; and the end of it
Unknown to the beginning.
Sic. Noble Menenius,
Be you, then, as the people's officer.—
Masters, lay down your weapons.
Bru. Go not home.
Sic. Meet on the market-place.— We'll attend you there
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
In our first way.
Men. I'll bring him to you.— [*To the Senators*] Let me
Desire your company: he must come, or what
Is worst will follow.
First Sen. Pray you, let us to him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in* CORIOLANUS'S *house.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* Patricians.

Cor. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch
Below the beam of sight; yet will I still
Be thus to them.
First Pat. You do the nobler.
Cor. I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woolen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats; to show bare heads

In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance stood up
To speak of peace or war.

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you:
Why did you wish me milder? would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play
The man I am.

Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

Cor. Let go.

Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your disposition, if
You had not show'd them how ye were dispos'd
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Cor. Let them hang.

Vol. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS *and* Senators.

Men. Come, come, you've been too rough, something too rough;
You must return and mend it.

First Sen. There's no remedy;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

Vol. Pray, be counsel'd:
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

Men. Well said, noble woman!
Before he should thus stoop to th' herd, but that
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I'd put mine armor on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do?

Men. Return to the tribunes.

Cor. Well, what then? what then?

Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them? — I cannot do it to the gods;
Must I, then, do't to them?

Vol. You are too absolute;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I've heard you say,
Honor and policy, like unsever'd friends,
I' the war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,
In peace what each of them by th' other lose,
That they combine not there.
Cor. Tush, tush!
Men. A good demand.
Vol. If it be honor in your wars to seem
The same you are not,— which, for your best ends,
You adopt your policy,— how is it less or worse,
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honor, as in war; since that to both
It stands in like request?
Cor. Why force you this?
Vol. Because that now it lies you on to speak
To the people; not by your own instruction,
Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you
But with such words that are but rooted in
Your tongue, though but bastards, and syllables
Of no-allowance to your bosom's truth.
Now, this no more dishonors you at all
Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune, and
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature, where
My fortunes and my friends at stake requir'd
I should do so in honor: I am, in this,
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
For the inheritance of their loves, and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.
Men. Noble lady!—
Come, go with us; speak fair: you may salve so,
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past.
Vol. I prithee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
And thus far having stretch'd it,— here be with them,—
Thy knee bussing the stones,— for in such business

Action is eloquence, and th' eyes of th' ignorant
More learnèd than the ears,— waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling,— say to them,
Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.

Men. This but done,
Even as she speaks it, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
As words to little purpose.

Vol. Prithee now,
Go, and be rul'd: although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
Than flatter him in a bower.— Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. I've been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.

Men. Only fair speech.

Com. I think 'twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.

Vol. He must, and will.—
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

Cor. Must I go show them my unbarb'd sconce? must I
With my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't:
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mold of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw't against the wind.— To the market-place!—
You've put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life.

Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.

Vol. I prithee now, sweet son,— as thou hast said
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

Cor. Well, I must do't:
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,
Which quirèd with my drum, into a pipe
Small as an eunuch's, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! the smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks; and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips; and my arm'd knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath receiv'd an alms! — I will not do't;
Lest I surcease to honor mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

Vol. At thy choice, then:
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonor
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin: let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness; for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me;
But owe thy pride thyself.

Cor. Pray, be content:
Mother, I'm going to the market-place;
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
Cog their hearts from them, and come home belov'd
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul;
Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' the way of flattery further.

Vol. Do your will. [*Exit.*

Com. Away! the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself
To answer mildly; for they are prepar'd
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.

Cor. The word is "mildly:" — pray you, let us go:
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honor.

Men. Ay, but mildly.

Cor. Well, mildly be it, then, — mildly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Bru. In this point charge him home,— that he affects
Tyrannical power : if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people ;
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed.

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come ?
Æd. He's coming.
Bru. How accompanied ?
Æd. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favor'd him.
Sic. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procur'd,
Set down by the poll ?
Æd. I have ; 'tis ready.
Sic. Have you collected them by tribes ?
Æd. I have.
Sic. Assemble presently the people hither :
And when they hear me say, " It shall be so
I' the right and strength o' the commons," be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry " Fine,"— if death, cry " Death ;"
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' the truth o' the cause.
Æd. I shall inform them.
Bru. And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confus'd
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.
Æd. Very well.
Sic. Make them be strong, and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give't them.
Bru. Go about it.—
[*Exit Ædile.*
Put him to choler straight : he hath been us'd
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
Of contradiction : being once chaf'd, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance ; then he speaks

What's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.
Sic. Well, here he comes.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians.

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you.
Cor. Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece
Will bear the knave by the volume.— The honor'd gods
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among's!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!
First Sen. Amen, amen.
Men. A noble wish.

Re-enter Ædile, *with* Citizens.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.
Æd. List to your tribunes; audience! peace, I say!
Cor. First, hear me speak.
Both Tri. Well, say.— Peace, ho!
Cor. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?
Must all determine here?
Sic. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be prov'd upon you?
Cor. I'm content.
Men. Lo, citizens, he says he is content:
The warlike service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.
Cor. Scratches with briers,
Scars to move laughter only.
Men. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,
Rather than envy you.
Com. Well, well, no more.
Cor. What is the matter,

That being pass'd for consul with full voice,
I'm so dishonor'd, that the very hour
You take it off again ?
Sic. Answer to us.
Cor. Say, then : 'tis true, I ought so.
Sic. We charge you, that you have contriv'd to take
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical ;
For which you are a traitor to the people.
Cor. How ! traitor !
Men. Nay, temperately ; your promise.
Cor. The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people !
Call me their traitor ! — Thou injurious tribune !
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
" Thou liest " unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.
Sic. Mark you this, people ?
Citizens. To the rock, to the rock with him !
Sic. Peace !
We need not put new matter to his charge :
What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him ; even this,
So criminal, and in such capital kind,
Deserves th' extremest death.
Bru. But since he hath
Serv'd well for Rome,—
Cor. What do you prate of service ?
Bru. I talk of that that know it.
Cor. You ?
Men. Is this the promise that you made your mother ?
Com. Know, I pray you,—
Cor. I'll know no further :
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day,— I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying " Good morrow."

Sic. For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power ; as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it ; — in the name o' the people,
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city ;
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates : i' the people's name,
I say it shall be so.
Citizens. It shall be so,
It shall be so ; let him away : he's banish'd,
And it shall be so.
Com. Hear me, my masters and my common friends,-
Sic. He's sentenc'd : no more hearing.
Com. Let me speak ·
I have been consul, and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
My country's good with a respect more tender,
More holy, and profound, than mine own life,
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins ; then if I would
Speak that,—
Sic. We know your drift : — speak what ?
Bru. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people and his country :
It shall be so.
Citizens. It shall be so, it shall be so.
Cor. You common cry of curs ! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air,— I banish you ;
And here remain with your uncertainty !
Let every feeble rumor shake your hearts !
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
To banish your defenders ; till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
Making not reservation of yourselves,

Still your own foes, deliver you, as most
Abated captives, to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising, then,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.
[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, Menenius, Senators, and Patricians.*

Æd. The people's enemy is gone, is gone!
Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd! he is gone!
Hoo! hoo! [*Shouting, and throwing up their caps.*
Sic. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite;
Give him deserv'd vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.
Citizens. Come, come, let's see him out at gates; come, come: —
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! — come. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Rome. Before a gate of the city.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *and several young* Patricians.

Cor. Come, leave your tears: a brief farewell: — the beast
With many heads butts me away.— Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? you were us'd
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning: you were us'd to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.
Vir. O heavens! O heavens!
Cor. Nay, I prithee, woman,—
Vol. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish!
Cor. What, what, what!
I shall be lov'd when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,

If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labors you'd have done, and sav'd
Your husband so much sweat.— Cominius,
Droop not; adieu.— Farewell, my wife,— my mother:
I'll do well yet.— Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes.— My sometime general,
I've seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles; tell these sad women,
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at 'em.— My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace: and
Believe't not lightly,— though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen,— your son
Will or exceed the common, or be caught
With cautelous baits and practice.

Vol. My first son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile: determine on some course,
More than a wild exposure to each chance
That starts i' the way before thee.

Cor. O the gods!

Com. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
And we of thee: so, if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to seek a single man;
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' th' absence of the needer.

Cor. Fare ye well:
Thou'st years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That's yet unbruis'd: bring me but out at gate.—
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch; when I am forth,
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come,
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still; and never of me aught
But what is like me formerly.

Men. That's worthily
As any ear can hear.— Come, let's not weep.—

If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I'd with thee every foot.
Cor. Give me thy hand :—
Come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A street near the gate.*

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *and an* Ædile.

Sic. Bid them all home ; he's gone, and we'll no further.—
The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.
Bru. Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.
Sic. Bid them home:
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.
Bru. Dismiss them home. [*Exit Ædile.*
Here comes his mother.
Sic. Let's not meet her.
Bru. Why?
Sic. They say she's mad.
Bru. They have ta'en note of us : keep on your way.

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* MENENIUS.

Vol. O, ye're well met : the hoarded plague o' the gods
Requite your love!
Men. Peace, peace ; be not so loud.
Vol. If that I could for weeping, you should hear,—
Nay, and you shall hear some.— [*To Brutus*] Will you be gone?
Vir. [*to Sicinius*] You shall stay too : I would I had the power
To say so to my husband.
Sic. Are you mankind?
Vol. Ay, fool ; is that a shame? — Note but this fool.—
Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
Than thou hast spoken words? —
Sic. O blessèd heavens!
Vol. More noble blows than ever thou wise words ;

And for Rome's good.— I'll tell thee what ; — yet go : —
Nay, but thou shalt stay too : — I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.
Sic. What then ?
Vir. What then !
He'd make an end of thy posterity.
Vol. Bastards and all.—
Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome !
Men. Come, come, peace.
Sic. I would he had continu'd to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.
Bru. I would he had.
Vol. "I would he had" ! 'Twas you incens'd the rabble ; —
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know.
Bru. Pray, let us go.
Vol. Now, pray, sir, get you gone :
You've done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this : —
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son,—
This lady's husband here, this, do you see,—
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.
Bru. Well, well, we'll leave you.
Sic. Why stay we to be baited
With one that wants her wits ?
Vol. Take my prayers with you.—
[*Exeunt Tribunes.*
I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses ! Could I meet 'em
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.
Men. You've told them home ;
And, by my troth, you've cause. You'll sup with me ?
Vol. Anger's my meat ; I sup upon myself,
And so shall starve with feeding.— Come, let's go :
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.
Men. Fie, fie, fie ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A highway between Rome and Antium.*

Enter a Roman *and a* Volsce, *meeting.*

Rom. I know you well, sir, and you know me: your name, I think, is Adrian,

Vols. It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

Rom. I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against 'em: know you me yet?

Vols. Nicanor? no.

Rom. The same, sir.

Vols. You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favor is well approved by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state, to find you out there: you have well saved me a day's journey.

Rom. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections; the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

Vols. Hath been! is it ended, then? Our state thinks not so: they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

Rom. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again; for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people, and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

Vols. Coriolanus banished!

Rom. Banished, sir.

Vols. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

Rom. The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

Vols. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate thus accidentally to encounter you: you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

Rom. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

Vols. A most royal one; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

Rom. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Vols. You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

Rom. Well, let us go together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Antium. Before* AUFIDIUS'S *house.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

Cor. A goodly city is this Antium.— City,
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop: then know me not;
Lest that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones,
In puny battle slay me.

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir.

Cit. And you.

Cor. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies: is he in Antium?

Cit. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
At his house this night.

Cor. Which is his house, beseech you?

Cit. This, here, before you.

Cor. Thank you, sir: farewell.
[*Exit Citizen.*

O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose house, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity: so, fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me:

My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy town.— I'll enter : if he slay me,
He does fair justice ; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *The same. A hall in* AUFIDIUS'S *house. Music within. Enter a* Servant.

First Serv. Wine, wine, wine ! — What service is here ! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*

Enter a second Servant.

Sec. Serv. Where's Cotus ? my master calls for him.— Cotus ! [*Exit.*

Enter CORIOLANUS.

Cor. A goodly house : the feast smells well ; but I
Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the first Servant.

First Serv. What would you have, friend ? whence are you ? Here's no place for you : pray, go to the door. [*Exit.*

Cor. I have deserv'd no better entertainment
In being Coriolanus.

Re-enter second Servant.

Sec. Serv. Whence are you, sir ? — Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions ? —— Pray, get you out.

Cor. Away !

Sec. Serv. Away ! get you away.

Cor. Now thou'rt troublesome.

Sec. Serv. Are you so brave ? I'll have you talked with anon.

Enter a third Servant.

Third Serv. What fellow's this ?

Sec. Serv. A strange one as ever I looked on : I cannot get him out o' the house : prithee, call my master to him.

Third Serv. What have you to do here, fellow ? Pray you avoid the house.

Cor. Let me but stand ; I will not hurt your hearth.

Third Serv. What are you ?

Cor. A gentleman.
Third Serv. A marvelous poor one
Cor. True, so I am.
Third Serv. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.
Cor. Follow your function, go,
And batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away.*
Third Serv. What, you will not?—Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.
Sec. Serv. And I shall. [*Exit.*
Third Serv. Where dwellest thou?
Cor. Under the canopy.
Third Serv. Under the canopy!
Cor. Ay.
Third Serv. Where's that?
Cor. I' the city of kites and crows.
Third Serv. I' the city of kites and crows!—What an ass it is!—Then thou dwellest with daws too?
Cor. No, I serve not thy master.
Third Serv. How, sir! do you meddle with my master?
Cor. Ay; 'tis an honester service than to meddle with thy mistress:
Thou prat'st, and prat'st; serve with thy trencher, hence!
[*Beats him in.*

Enter AUFIDIUS, *with the second* Servant.

Auf. Where is this fellow?
Sec. Serv. Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within. [*The two Servants retire.*
Auf. Whence com'st thou? what wouldst thou? thy name?
Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name?
Cor. If, Tullus, [*Unmuffling.*
Not yet thou know'st me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.
Auf. What is thy name?
Cor. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.
Auf. Say, what's thy name?
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face

Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what's thy name?
Cor. Prepare thy brow to frown: — know'st thou me yet?
Auf. I know thee not: — thy name?
Cor. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus: the painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me: only that name remains;
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest;
And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be
Whoop'd out of Rome. Now, this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope —
Mistake me not — to save my life; for if
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world
I would have 'voided thee; but in mere spite,
To be full quit of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee; for I will fight
Against my canker'd country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou'rt tir'd, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

Auf. O Marcius, Marcius!
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
Should from yond cloud speak divine things,
And say "'Tis true," I'd not believe them more
Than thee, all-noble Marcius.— Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where against
My grainèd ash an hundred times hath broke,
And scar'd the moon with splinters: here I clip
The anvil of my sword; and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valor. Know thou first
I lov'd the maid I married; never man
Sigh'd truer breath; but that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee.
We have a power on foot; and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
Or lose mine arm for't: thou hast beat me out
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;
We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy; and, pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,
And take our friendly senators by the hands;
Who now are here taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepar'd against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

Cor. You bless me, gods!

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
Th' one half of my commission; and set down —
As best thou art experienc'd, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness — thine own ways;
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,

Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in :
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes !
And more a friend than e'er an enemy ;
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand : most welcome !

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius.—The two Servants come forward.*

First Serv. Here's a strange alteration !

Sec. Serv. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken him with a cudgel ; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

First Serv. What an arm he has ! he turned me about with his finger and his thumb as one would set up a top.

Sec. Serv. Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him : he had, sir, a kind of face, methought, — I cannot tell how to term it.

First Serv. He had so ; looking as it were, — Would I were hanged, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

Sec. Serv. So did I, I'll be sworn : he is simply the rarest man i' the world.

First Serv. I think he is : but a greater soldier than he you wot on.

Sec Serv. Who, my master ?

First Serv. Nay, it's no matter for that.

Sec. Serv. Worth six on him.

First Serv. Nay, not so neither : but I take him to be the greater soldier.

Sec. Serv. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that : for the defense of a town our general is excellent.

First Serv. Ay, and for an assault too.

Re-enter third Servant.

Third. Serv. O slaves, I can tell you news,— news, you rascals !

First and Sec. Serv. What, what, what ? let's partake.

Third Serv. I would not be a Roman, of all nations ; I had as lief be a condemned man.

First and Sec. Serv. Wherefore ? wherefore ?

Third Serv. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general,— Caius Marcius.

First Serv. Why do you say "thwack our general"?

Third Serv. I do not say "thwack our general;" but he was always good enough for him.

Sec. Serv. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

First Serv. He was too hard for him directly, to say the truth on't: before Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

Sec. Serv. An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

First Serv. But, more of thy news?

Third Serv. Why, he is so made on here within as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the table; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him: our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with's hand, and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle, and but one half of what he was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by the ears: he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage polled.

Sec. Serv. And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

Third Serv. Do't! he will do't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.

First Serv. Directitude! what's that?

Third Serv. But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

First Serv. But when goes this forward?

Third Serv. To-morrow; to-day; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

Sec. Serv. Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

First Serv. Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace

as far as day does night; it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

Sec. Serv. 'Tis so: and as war, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

First Serv. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

Third Serv. Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians.— They are rising, they are rising.

All Three. In, in, in, in! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;
His remedies are tame i' the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well; who rather had,
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
Dissentious numbers pestering streets, than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops, and going
About their functions friendly.

Bru. We stood to't in good time.— Is this Menenius?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind
Of late.

Enter MENENIUS.

Hail, sir!

Bru. Hail, sir!

Men. Hail to you both!

Sic. Your Coriolanus, sir, is not much miss'd
But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand;
And so would do, were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporiz'd.

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens.

Citizens. The gods preserve you both!
Sic. God-den, our neighbors.
Bru. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.
First Cit. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,
Are bound to pray for you both.
Sic. Live, and thrive!
Bru. Farewell, kind neighbors: we wish'd Coriolanus
Had lov'd you as we did.
Citizens. Now the gods keep you!
Both Tri. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt Citizens.*
Sic. This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets
Crying confusion.
Bru. Caius Marcius was
A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent,
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving,—
Sic. And affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.
Men. I think not so.
Sic. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.
Bru. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Ædile.

Æd. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers
Are enter'd in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before 'em.
Men. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.
Sic. Come, what talk you
Of Marcius?

Bru. Go see this rumorer whipp'd.— It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.
Men. Cannot be!
We have record that very well it can;
And three examples of the like have been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this;
Lest you shall chance to whip your information,
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.
Sic. Tell not me:
I know this cannot be.
Bru. Not possible.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come
That turns their countenances.
Sic. 'Tis this slave; —
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes: — his raising;
Nothing but his report.
Mess. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded: and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.
Sic. What more fearful?
Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths —
How probable I do not know — that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.
Sic. This is most likely!
Bru. Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.
Sic. The very trick on't.
Men. This is unlikely:
He and Aufidius can no more atone
Than violentest contrariety.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sec. Mess. You are sent for to the senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories; and have already

O'erborne their way, consum'd with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. O, you have made good work!
Men. What news? what news?
Com. You've holp to ravish your own daughters, and
To melt the city leads upon your pates;
To see your wives dishonor'd to your noses,—
Men. What's the news? what's the news?
Com. Your temples burnèd in their cement; and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confin'd
Into an auger's bore.
Men. Pray now, your news?—
You've made fair work, I fear me.— Pray, your news?—
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,—
Com. If!
He is their god: he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.
Men. You've made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic-eaters!
Com. He will shake
Your Rome about your ears.
Men. As Hercules
Did shake down mellow fruit.— You've made fair work!
Bru. But is this true, sir?
Com. Ay; and you'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?
Your enemies and his find something in him.
Men. We are all undone, unless
The noble man have mercy.
Com. Who shall ask it?
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people

Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they
Should say, "Be good to Rome," they charg'd him even
As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,
And therein show'd like enemies.

Men. 'Tis true;
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say, "Beseech you, cease."—You've made fair hands,
You and your crafts! you've crafted fair!

Com. You've brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
So incapable of help.

Both Tri. Say not, we brought it.

Men. How! Was it we? we lov'd him; but, like beasts
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' the city.

Com. But I fear
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points
As if he were his officer:—desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defense,
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

Men. Here come the clusters.—
And is Aufidius with him?—You are they
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;
And not a hair upon a soldier's head
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
If he could burn us all into one coal,
We have deserv'd it.

Citizens. Faith, we hear fearful news.

First Cit. For mine own part,
When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.

Sec. Cit. And so did I.

Third Cit. And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did

very many of us: that we did, we did for the best; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

Com. Ye're goodly things, you voices!

Men. You have made
Good work, you and your cry! — Shall's to the capitol?

Com. O, ay, what else?

[*Exeunt Cominius and Menenius.*

Sic. Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd:
These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no signs of fear.

First Cit. The gods be good to us! — Come, masters, let's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we banished him.

Sec. Cit. So did we all. But, come, let's home.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*

Bru. I do not like this news.

Sic. Nor I.

Bru. Let's to the Capitol.— Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

Sic. Pray, let us go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *A camp, at a small distance from Rome.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *and his* Lieutenant.

Auf. Do they still fly to the Roman?

Lieu. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

Auf. I cannot help it now,
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
Even to my person, than I thought he would
When first I did embrace him: yet his nature
In that's no changeling; and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

Lieu. Yet I wish, sir,—
I mean for your particular,— you had not
Join'd in commission with him; but either

Had borne the action of yourself, or else
To him had left it solely.

Auf. I understand thee well; and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,
Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieu. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?

Auf. All places yield to him ere he sits down;
And the nobility of Rome are his:
The senators and patricians love him too:
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
T' expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First he was
A noble servant to them; but he could not
Carry his honors even: whether 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controll'd the war; but one of these —
As he hath spices of them all, not all,
For I dare so far free him — made him fear'd,
So hated, and so banish'd: but he has a merit,
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues
Lie in th' interpretation of the time;
And power, unto itself most commendable,
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
T' extol what it hath done.
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail.

Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou'rt poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *and others.*

Men. No, I'll not go: you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general; who lov'd him
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father:
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy: nay, if he coy'd
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.
Com. He would not seem to know me.
Men. Do you hear?
Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name:
I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. Coriolanus
He would not answer to: forbade all names;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forg'd himself a name o' the fire
Of burning Rome.
Men. Why, so,—you've made good work!
A pair of tribunes that have wreck'd fair Rome
To make coals cheap,—a noble memory!
Com. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was least expected: he replied,
It was a rare petition of a state
To one whom they had punish'd.
Men. Very well:
Could he say less?
Com. I offer'd to awaken his regard
For's private friends: his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
And still to nose th' offense.
Men. For one poor grain or two!
I'm one of those; his mother, wife, his child,

And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
You are the musty chaff; and you are smelt
Above the moon: we must be burnt for you.
Sic. Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.
Men. No, I'll not meddle.
Sic. Pray you now, go to him.
Men. What should I do?
Bru. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.
Men. Well, and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard; what then?
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness? say't be so?
Sic. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.
Men. I'll undertake't:
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not din'd:
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we've stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts; therefore I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I'll set upon him.
Bru. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.
Men. Good faith, I'll prove him.
Speed how it will, you shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [*Exit.*
Com. He'll never hear him.
Sic. Not?
Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye

Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him;
'Twas very faintly he said "Rise;" dismiss'd me
Thus, with his speechless hand: what he would do,
He sent in writing after me; what he would not,
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions:
So that all hope is vain,
Unless in's noble mother and his wife;
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore let's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *An outpost of the Volscian camp before Rome. The Sentinels at their stations.*

Enter to them MENENIUS.

First S. Stay: whence are you?
Sec. S. Stand, and go back.
Men. You guard like men; 'tis well: but, by your leave,
I am an officer of state, and come
To speak with Coriolanus.
First S. From whence?
Men. From Rome.
First S. You may not pass, you must return: our general
Will no more hear from thence.
Sec. S. You'll see your Rome embrac'd with fire, before
You'll speak with Coriolanus.
Men. Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks
My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.
First S. Be't so; go back: the virtue of your name
Is not here passable.
Men. I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover: I have been
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;
For I have ever magnified my friends—
Of whom he's chief—with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,

I've tumbled past the throw; and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing: therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

First S. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

Men. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the part of your general.

Sec. S. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

Men. Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

First S. You are a Roman, are you?

Men. I am, as thy general is.

First S. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution: you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

Men. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

Sec. S. Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

First S. My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood; — back,— that's the utmost of your having: — back.

Men. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Cor. What's the matter?

Men. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you: you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my

son Coriolanus : guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering ; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee.—[*To Cor.*] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! thou art preparing fire for us ; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of our gates with sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here,—this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away!

Men. How! away!

Cor. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others: though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I lov'd thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake. [*Gives a letter.*
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak.— This man, Aufidius,
Was my belov'd in Rome: yet thou behold'st!

Auf. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius.*

First S. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

Sec. S. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: you know the way home again.

First S. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

Sec. S. What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

Men. I neither care for the world nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you,

be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Exit.*

First S. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

Sec. S. The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The tent of* CORIOLANUS.

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, *and others.*

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
Set down our host.— My partner in this action,
You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly
I have borne this business.

Auf. Only their ends
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper, no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

Cor. This last old man,
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
Lov'd me above the measure of a father;
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him: for whose old love I have,
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
The first conditions, which they did refuse,
And cannot now accept; to grace him only
That thought he could do more, a very little
I've yielded to: fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to.— Ha! what shout is this?
[*Shout within.*
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.

Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *leading young* MARCIUS, VALERIA, *and* Attendants.

My wife comes foremost; then the honor'd mold
Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.—
What is that court'sy worth? or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? — I melt, and am not

Of stronger earth than others.— My mother bows;
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod: and my young boy
Hath an aspéct of intercession, which
Great Nature cries "Deny not."— Let the Volsces
Plow Rome, and harrow Italy: I'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct; but stand,
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.

Vir. My lord and husband!

Cor. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

Vir. The sorrow that delivers us thus chang'd
Makes you think so.

Cor. Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace.— Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say,
For that, "Forgive our Romans." O, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip
Hath virgin'd it e'er since.— You gods! I prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted: sink, my knee, i' th' earth; [*Kneels.*
Of thy deep duty more impression show
Than that of common sons.

Vol. O, stand up bless'd! [*Raising him.*
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
I kneel before thee; and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels; he hastily raises her.*

Cor. What is this?
Your knees to me? to your corrected son?
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun;
Murdering impossibility, to make
What cannot be, slight work.

Vol. Thou art my warrior;
I holp to frame thee.— Do you know this lady?

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle,
That's curded by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple: — dear Valeria!
Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by th' interpretation of full time
May show like all yourself.
Cor. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove
To shame unvulnerable, and stick i' the wars
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,
And saving those that eye thee!
Vol. Your knee, sirrah.
Cor. That's my brave boy!
Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
Are suitors to you.
Cor. I beseech you, peace:
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before,—
The things I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics: — tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not
T' allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.
Vol. O, no more, no more!
You've said you will not grant us any thing;
For we have nothing else to ask, but that
Which you deny already: yet we'll ask;
That, if we fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.
Cor. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we'll
Hear naught from Rome in private.— Your request?
Vol. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We've led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither: since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow;
Making the mother, wife, and child, to see

The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas, how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we're bound,—together with thy victory,
Whereto we're bound? alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win; for either thou
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
With manacles thorough our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread —
Trust to't, thou shalt not — on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.

Young Mar. 'A shall not tread on me;
I'll run away till I'm bigger, but then I'll fight.

Cor. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
I've sat too long. [*Rising.*

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
As poisonous of your honor: no; our suit
Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volsces
May say, "This mercy we have show'd;" the Romans,
"This we receiv'd;" and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, "Be bless'd
For making up this peace!" Thou know'st, great son,

The end of war's uncertain ; but this certain,
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses ;
Whose chronicle thus writ,— "The man was noble,
But with his last attempt he wip'd it out ;
Destroy'd his country ; and his name remains
To th' ensuing age abhorr'd." Speak to me, son :
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honor,
To imitate the graces of the gods ;
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air,
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak ?
Think'st thou it honorable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs ? — Daughter, speak you :
He cares not for your weeping,— Speak thou, boy :
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons.— There's no man in the world
More bound to's mother ; yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' the stocks.— Thou'st never in thy life
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy ;
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
Loaden with honor. Say my request's unjust,
And spurn me back : but if it be not so,
Thou art not honest ; and the gods will plague thee,
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs.— He turns away :
Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down : an end ;
This is the last : — so we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbors.— Nay, behold's :
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny't.— Come, let us go :
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;
His wife is in Corioli, and this child
Like him by chance.— Yet give us our dispatch :
I'm hush'd until our city be a-fire,
And then I'll speak a little.

Cor. [*after holding Volumnia by the hand in silence*]
O mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
You've won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son,— believe it, O believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.—
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, say would you have heard
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

Auf. I was mov'd withal.

Cor. I dare be sworn you were:
And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause.— O mother! wife!

Auf. [*aside*] I'm glad thou'st set thy mercy and thy honor
At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
Myself a former fortune.

[*The ladies make signs to Coriolanus.*

Cor. [*to Volumnia, Virgilia, &c.*] Ay, by and by;
But we will drink together; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter MENENIUS *with* SICINIUS.

Men. See you yond coign o' the Capitol,— yond corner-stone?

Sic. Why, what of that?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say

there is no hope in't: our throats are sentenced, and stay upon execution.

Sic. Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub and a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He loved his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me: and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading: he is able to pierce a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done, is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity, and a heaven to throne in.

Sic. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

Men. I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find: and all this is long of you.

Sic. The gods be good unto us!

Men. No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house:
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune,
And hale him up and down; all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sic. What's the news?

Sec. Mess. Good news, good news;—the ladies have prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodg'd, and Marcius gone:
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not th' expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sic. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?
Sec. Mess. As certain as I know the sun is fire:
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you!

[*Trumpets and hautboys sounded, and drums beaten, all together; shouting also, within.*

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,
Tabors and cymbals, and the shouting Romans,
Make the sun dance. Hark you! [*Shouting again within*
Men. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worthy of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You've pray'd well to-day:
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I'd not have given a doit.—Hark, how they joy!
[*Shouting and music still, within.*
Sic. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.
Sec. Mess. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.
Sic. They're near the city?
Sec. Mess. Almost at point to enter.
Sic. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The same. A street near the gate.*

Enter, in procession, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, *&c., accompanied by* Senators, Patricians, *and* Citizens.

First Sen. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them:
Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
Cry, "Welcome, ladies, welcome!"
All. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Corioli. A public place.*

Enter AUFIDIUS, *with* Attendants.

Auf. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here:
Deliver them this paper: having read it,
Bid them repair to the market-place; where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath enter'd, and
Intends t' appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words: dispatch.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

Enter three or four Conspirators *of* AUFIDIUS'S *faction.*

Most welcome!

First Con. How is it with our general?

Auf. Even so
As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
And with his charity slain.

Sec. Con. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

Auf. Sir, I cannot tell:
We must proceed as we do find the people.

Third Con. The people will remain uncertain whilst
'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

Auf. I know it;
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I rais'd him, and I pawn'd
Mine honor for his truth: who being so heighten'd,
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

Third Con. Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping,—

Auf. That I would have spoke of:
Being banish'd for't, he came unto my hearth;
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him;
Made him joint-servant with me; give him way

In all his own desires; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men; serv'd his designments
In mine own person; holp to reap the fame
Which he did end all his; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong: till, at the last,
I seem'd his follower, not partner; and
He wag'd me with his countenance, as if
I had been mercenary.

First Con. So he did, my lord,—
The army marvel'd at it; and, in the last,
When he had carried Rome, and that we look'd
For no less spoil than glory,—

Auf. There was it; —
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labor
Of our great action: therefore shall he die,
And I'll renew me in his fall.— But, hark!

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people.*

First Con. Your native town you enter'd like a post,
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.

Sec. Con. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.

Third Con. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounc'd shall bury
His reasons with his body.

Auf. Say no more:
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords *of the city.*

Lords. You are most welcome home.

Auf. I've not deserv'd it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perus'd
What I have written to you?

Lords. We have.

First Lord. And grieve to hear't.
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines: but there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding,— this admits no excuse.
Auf. He approaches; you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, *with drum and colors; a crowd of* Citizens *with him.*

Cor. Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier;
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know,
That prosperously I have attempted, and,
With bloody passage, led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We've made peace,
With no less honor to the Antiates
Than shame to the Romans: and we here deliver,
Subscrib'd by the consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' the senate, what
We have compounded on.
Auf. Read it not, noble lords;
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree
He hath abus'd your powers.
Cor. Traitor! — how now!
Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius!
Cor. Marcius!
Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius: dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus, in Corioli? —
You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously
He has betray'd your business, and given up,
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome —
I say, your city — to his wife and mother;
Breaking his oath and resolution, like
A twist of rotten silk; never admitting
Counsel o' the war; but at his nurse's tears
He whin'd and roar'd away your victory;

That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
Look'd wondering each at other.
Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?
Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears!
Cor. Ha!
Auf. No more.
Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. Boy! O slave! —
Pardon me, lords; 'tis the first time that ever
I was forc'd to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion —
Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him; that
Must bear my beating to his grave — shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.
First Lord. Peace, both, and hear me speak.
Cor. Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me.— Boy! false hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:
Alone I did it.— Boy!
Auf. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
'Fore your own eyes and ears?
All the Conspirators. Let him die for't!
Citizens. Tear him to pieces! — Do it presently! —
He killed my son! — My daughter! — He killed my
cousin Marcus! — He killed my father! —
Sec Lord. Peace, ho! — no outrage: — peace!
The man is noble, and his fame folds-in
This orb o' th' earth. His last offenses to us
Shall have judicious hearing.— Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.
Cor. O that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword!
Auf. Insolent villain!
All the Conspirators. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!
[*Aufidius and the Conspirators draw, and kill Coriolanus, who falls: Aufidius stands on him.*

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold!
Auf. My noble masters, hear me speak.
First Lord. O Tullus,—
Sec Lord. Thou'st done a deed whereat valor will weep.
Third Lord. Tread not upon him.— Masters all, be quiet;
Put up your swords.
Auf. My lords, when you shall know — as in this rage
Provok'd by him, you cannot — the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honors
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.
First Lord. Bear from hence his body,—
And mourn you for him: — let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.
Sec. Lord. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.
Auf. My rage is gone;
And I am struck with sorrow.— Take him up: —
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.—
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully:
Trail your steel pikes.—Though in this city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.—
Assist.

[*Exeunt, bearing the body of Coriolanus. A dead-march sounded.*

THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THESEUS, duke of Athens.
PIRITHOUS, an Athenian general.
ARTESIUS, an Athenian captain.
PALAMON, } nephews to Creon
ARCITE, } king of Thebes.
VALERIUS, a Theban nobleman.
Six Knights.
Herald.
Gaoler.
Wooer to the Gaoler's Daughter.
Doctor.
Brother } to the Gaoler.
Friends }
Gentleman.
GERROLD, a schoolmaster.

HIPPOLYTA, an Amazon, bride to Theseus.
EMILIA, her sister.
Three Queens.
Gaoler's Daughter.
Waiting-woman to Emilia.

Countrymen, Messengers, a man personating Hymen, Boy, Executioner, Guard, and Attendants. Country wenches, and women personating Nymphs.

SCENE—*Athens and the neighborhood, except in part of the first act, where it is Thebes and the neighborhood.*

PROLOGUE. [*Flourish.*

New plays and maidenheads are near akin;
Much follow'd both, for both much money gi'en,
If they stand sound and well: and a good play,
Whose modest scenes blush on his marriage-day,
And shake to lose his honor, is like her
That, after holy tie and first night's stir,
Yet still is modesty, and still retains

More of the maid to sight than husband's pains.
We pray our play may be so; for I'm sure
It has a noble breeder and a pure,
A learnèd, and a poet never went
More famous yet 'twixt Po and silver Trent:
Chaucer, of all admir'd, the story gives;
There constant to eternity it lives.
If we let fall the nobleness of this,
And the first sound this child hear be a hiss,
How will it shake the bones of that good man,
And make him cry from under ground, "O, fan
From me the witless chaff of such a writer
That blasts my bays, and my fam'd works makes lighter
Than Robin Hood!" This is the fear we bring;
For, to say truth, it were an endless thing,
And too ambitious, to aspire to him.
Weak as we are, and almost breathless swim
In this deep water, do but you hold out
Your helping hands, and we shall tack about,
And something do to save us: you shall hear
Scenes, though below his art, may yet appear
Worth two hours' travail. To his bones sweet sleep!
Content to you! — If this play do not keep
A little dull time from us, we perceive
Our losses fall so thick, we must needs leave. [*Flourish.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Athens. Before a temple.*

Enter Hymen *with a torch burning; a* Boy, *in a white robe, before, singing and strewing flowers; after* Hymen, *a* Nymph, *encompassed in her tresses, bearing a wheaten garland; then* THESEUS, *between two other* Nymphs *with wheaten chaplets on their heads; then* HIPPOLYTA, *the bride, led by* PIRITHOUS, *and another holding a garland over her head, her tresses likewise hanging; after her,* EMILIA, *holding up her train;* ARTESIUS *and* Attendants.

SONG *by the Boy.*

Roses, their sharp spines being gone,
Not royal in their smells alone,
    But in their hue;
Maiden pinks, of odor faint,
Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,
    And sweet thyme true;

Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
Merry spring-time's harbinger,
    With her bells dim;
Oxlips in their cradles growing,
Marigolds on deathbeds blowing,
    Lark's-heels trim;

All dear Nature's children sweet,
Lie 'fore bride and bridegroom's feet,
    Blessing their sense! [*Strewing flowers.*
Not an angel of the air,
Bird melodious or bird fair,
    Be absent hence!

The crow, the slanderous cuckoo, nor
The boding raven, nor chough hoar,
    Nor chattering pie,
May on our bride-house perch or sing,
Or with them any discord bring,
    But from it fly!

Enter three Queens, *in black, with veils stained, and wearing imperial crowns. The first* Queen *falls down at the foot of* THESEUS; *the second falls down at the foot of* HIPPOLYTA; *the third before* EMILIA.

First Queen. For pity's sake and true gentility's,
Hear, and respect me!
Sec. Queen. For your mother's sake,
And as you wish your womb may thrive with fair ones,
Hear, and respect me!
Third Queen. Now, for the love of him whom Jove hath mark'd
The honor of your bed, and for the sake

Of clear virginity, be advocate
For us and our distresses! This good deed
Shall raze you out o' the book of trespasses
All you are set down there.
Thes. Sad lady, rise.
Hib. Stand up.
Emi. No knees to me:
What woman I may stead that is distress'd
Does bind me to her.
Thes. What's your request? deliver you for all.
First Queen. We are three queens, whose sovereigns fell before
The wrath of cruel Creon; who endure
The beaks of ravens, talons of the kites,
And pecks of crows, in the foul fields of Thebes:
He will not suffer us to burn their bones,
To urn their ashes, nor to take th' offense
Of mortal loathsomeness from the blest eye
Of holy Phœbus, but infects the winds
With stench of our slain lords. O, pity, duke!
Thou purger of the earth, draw thy fear'd sword,
That does good turns to the world; give us the bones
Of our dead kings, that we may chapel them;
And, of thy boundless goodness, take some note
That for our crownèd heads we have no roof
Save this, which is the lion's and the bear's,
And vault to every thing!
Thes. Pray you, kneel not:
I was transported with your speech, and suffer'd
Your knees to wrong themselves. I've heard the fortunes
Of your dead lords, which gives me such lamenting
As wakes my vengeance and revenge for 'em.
King Capanëus was your lord: the day
That he should marry you, at such a season
As now it is with me, I met your groom
By Mars's altar; you were that time fair,
Not Juno's mantle fairer than your tresses,
Nor in more bounty spread her; your wheaten wreath
Was then nor thrash'd nor blasted; Fortune at you
Dimpled her cheeks with smiles; Hercules our kinsman—
Then weaker than your eyes—laid by his club;
He tumbled down upon his Nemean hide,

And swore his sinews thaw'd. O, grief and time,
Fearful consumers, you will all devour!
First Queen. O, I hope some god,
Some god hath put his mercy in your manhood,
Whereto he'll infuse power, and press you forth
Our undertaker!
Thes. O, no knees, none, widow!
Unto the helmeted Bellona use them,
And pray for me, your soldier.—
Troubled I am. [*Turns away*
Sec. Queen. Honor'd Hippolyta,
Most dreaded Amazonian, that hast slain
The scythe-tusk'd boar; that, with thy arm as strong
As it is white, wast near to make the male
To thy sex captive, but that this thy lord —
Born to uphold creation in that honor
First Nature styl'd it in — shrunk thee into
The bound thou wast o'erflowing, at once subduing
Thy force and thy affection; soldieress,
That equally canst poise sternness with pity;
Who now, I know, hast much more power on him
Than e'er he had on thee; who ow'st his strength
And his love too, who is a servant for
The tenor of thy speech; dear glass of ladies,
Bid him that we, whom flaming War doth scorch,
Under the shadow of his sword may cool us;
Require him he advance it o'er our heads;
Speak't in a woman's key, like such a woman
As any of us three; weep ere you fail;
Lend us a knee;
But touch the ground for us no longer time
Than a dove's motion, when the head's pluck'd off;
Tell him, if he i' the blood-siz'd field lay swoln,
Showing the sun his teeth, grinning at the moon,
What you would do!
Hip. Poor lady, say no more:
I had as lief trace this good action with you
As that whereto I'm going, and ne'er yet
Went I so willing way. My lord is taken
Heart-deep with your distress: let him consider;
I'll speak anon.
Third Queen. [*To Emilia*] O, my petition was

Set down in ice, which, by hot grief uncandied,
Melts into drops; so sorrow, wanting form,
Is press'd with deeper matter.
Emi. Pray, stand up:
Your grief is written in your cheek.
Third Queen. O, woe!
You cannot read it there: there, through my tears,
Like wrinkled pebbles in a glassy stream,
You may behold it. Lady, lady, alack,
He that will all the treasure know o' th' earth
Must know the center too; he that will fish
For my least minnow, let him lead his line
To catch one at my heart. O, pardon me!
Extremity, that sharpens sundry wits,
Makes me a fool.
Emi. Pray you, say nothing; pray you.
Who cannot feel nor see the rain, being in't,
Knows neither wet nor dry. If that you were
The ground-piece of some painter, I would buy you,
T' instruct me 'gainst a capital grief indeed; —
Such heart-pierc'd demonstration! — but, alas,
Being a natural sister of our sex,
Your sorrow beats so ardently upon me,
That it shall make a counter-reflect 'gainst
My brother's heart, and warm it to some pity,
Though it were made of stone: pray, have good comfort.
Thes. Forward to the temple! leave not out a jot
O' the sacred ceremony.
First Queen. O, this celebration
Will longer last, and be more costly, than
Your suppliants' war! Remember that your fame
Knolls in th' ear o' the world: what you do quickly
Is not done rashly; your first thought is more
Than others' labor'd meditance; your premeditating
More than their actions; but — O Jove! — your actions,
Soon as they move, as ospreys do the fish,
Subdue before they touch: think, dear duke, think
What beds our slain kings have!
Sec. Queen. What griefs our beds,
That our dear lords have none!
Third Queen. None fit for the dead!
Those that with cords, knives, drams, precipitance,

Weary of this world's light, have to themselves
Been death's most horrid agents, human grace
Affords them dust and shadow.
First Queen. But our lords
Lie blistering 'fore the visitating sun,
And were good kings when living.
Thes. It is true;
And I will give you comfort,
To give your dead lords graves: the which to do
Must make some work with Creon.
First Queen. And that work
Presents itself to the doing:
Now 'twill take form; the heats are gone to-morrow;
Then bootless toil must recompense itself
With its own sweat; now he is secure,
Not dreams we stand before your puissance,
Rinsing our holy begging in our eyes,
To make petition clear.
Sec. Queen. Now you may take him
Drunk with his victory.
Third Queen. And his army full
Of bread and sloth.
Thes. Artesius, that best know'st
How to draw out, fit to this enterprise
The prim'st for this proceeding, and the number
To carry such a business; forth and levy
Our worthiest instruments; whilst we dispatch
This grand act of our life, this daring deed
Of fate in wedlock.
First Queen. Dowagers, take hands;
Let us be widows to our woes; delay
Commends us to a famishing hope.
All the Queens. Farewell!
Sec. Queen. We come unseasonably; but when could grief
Cull forth, as unpang'd judgment can, fitt'st time
For best solicitation?
Thes. Why, good ladies,
This is a service, whereto I am going,
Greater than any war; it more imports me
Than all the actions that I have foregone,
Or futurely can cope.

First Queen. The more proclaiming
Our suit shall be neglected : when her arms,
Able to lock Jove from a synod, shall
By warranting moonlight corslet thee, O, when
Her twinning cherries shall their sweetness fall
Upon thy tasteful lips, what wilt thou think
Of rotten kings or blubber'd queens? what care
For what thou feel'st not, what thou feel'st being able
To make Mars spurn his drum? O, if thou couch
But one night with her, every hour in't will
Take hostage of thee for a hundred, and
Thou shalt remember nothing more than what
That banquet bids thee to!

Hip. Though much unlike [*Kneeling.*
You should be so transported, as much sorry
I should be such a suitor ; yet I think,
Did I not by th' abstaining of my joy,
Which breeds a deeper longing, cure their surfeit
That craves a present medicine, I should pluck
All ladies' scandal on me : therefore, sir,
As I shall here make trial of my prayers,
Either presuming them to have some force,
Or sentencing for aye their vigor dumb,
Prorogue this business we are going about, and hang
Your shield afore your heart, about that neck
Which is my fee, and which I freely lend
To do these poor queens service.

All the Queens. [*to Emilia*] O, help now!
Our cause cries for your knee.

Emi. If you grant not [*Kneeling.*
My sister her petition, in that force,
With that celerity and nature, which
She makes it in, from henceforth I'll not dare
To ask you any thing, nor be so hardy
Ever to take a husband.

Thes. Pray, stand up : [*Hip. and Emil. rise.*
I am entreating of myself to do
That which you kneel to have me.— Pirithous,
Lead on the bride : get you and pray the gods
For success and return ; omit not any thing
In the pretended celebration.— Queens,
Follow your soldier.— [*To Artesius*] As before, hence you,

And at the banks of Aulis meet us with
The forces you can raise, where we shall find
The moiety of a number, for a business
More bigger-look'd.— Since that our theme is haste,
I stamp this kiss upon thy currant lip ; [*Kisses Hippolyta.*
Sweet, keep it as my token.— Set you forward ;
For I will see you gone.— [*Exit Artesius.*
Farewell, my beauteous sister.— Pirithous,
Keep the feast full ; bate not an hour on't.
Pir. Sir,
I'll follow you at heels : the feast's solemnity
Shall want till your return.
Thes. Cousin, I charge you
Budge not from Athens ; we shall be returning
Ere you can end this feast, of which, I pray you,
Make no abatement. Once more, farewell all.
[*Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous, Hymen, Boy, Nymphs, and Attendants enter the temple.*
First Queen. Thus dost thou still make good
The tongue o' the world.
Sec. Queen. And earn'st a deity
Equal with Mars.
Third Queen. If not above him ; for
Thou, being but mortal, mak'st affections bend
To godlike honors ; they themselves, some say,
Groan under such a mastery.
Thes. As we are men,
Thus should we do ; being sensually subdu'd,
We lose our human title. Good cheer, ladies !
Now turn we towards your comforts. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Thebes. The court of the palace.*

Enter PALAMON *and* ARCITE.

Arc. Dear Palamon, dearer in love than blood,
And our prime cousin, yet unharden'd in
The crimes of nature ; let us leave the city
Thebes, and the temptings in't, before we further
Sully our gloss of youth :
And here to keep in abstinence we shame
As in incontinence ; for not to swim
I' th' aid o' the current, were almost to sink,

At least to frustrate striving; and to follow
The common stream, 'twould bring us to an eddy
Where we should turn or drown; if labor through,
Our gain but life and weakness.

Pal. Your advice
Is cried up with example: what strange ruins,
Since first we went to school, may we perceive
Walking in Thebes! scars and bare weeds,
The gain o' the martialist, who did propound
To his bold ends honor and golden ingots,
Which, though he won, he had not; and now flurted
By peace, for whom he fought! Who, then, shall offer
To Mars's so-scorn'd altar? I do bleed
When such I meet, and wish great Juno would
Resume her ancient fit of jealousy,
To get the soldier work, that peace might purge
For her repletion, and retain anew
Her charitable heart, now hard, and harsher
Than strife or war could be.

Arc. Are you not out?
Meet you no ruin but the soldier in
The cranks and turns of Thebes? You did begin
As if you met decays of many kinds:
Perceive you none that do arouse your pity,
But th' unconsider'd soldier?

Pal. Yes; I pity
Decays where'er I find them; but such most
That, sweating in an honorable toil,
Are paid with ice to cool 'em.

Arc. 'Tis not this
I did begin to speak of; this is virtue
Of no respect in Thebes: I spake of Thebes,
How dangerous, if we will keep our honors,
It is for our residing; where every evil
Hath a good color; where every seeming good's
A certain evil; where not to be even jump
As they are here, were to be strangers, and
Such things to be mere monsters.

Pal. 'Tis in our power —
Unless we fear that apes can tutor 's — to
Be masters of our manners: what need I
Affect another's gait, which is not catching

Where there is faith? or to be fond upon
Another's way of speech, when by mine own
I may be reasonably conceiv'd, sav'd too,
Speaking it truly? why am I bound
By any generous bond to follow him
Follows his tailor, haply so long until
The follow'd make pursuit? or let me know
Why mine own barber is unblest, with him
My poor chin too, for 'tis not scissar'd just
To such a favorite's glass? what canon is there
That does command my rapier from my hip,
To dangle't in my hand, or to go tip-toe
Before the street be foul? Either I am
The fore-horse in the team, or I am none
That draw i' the sequent trace. These poor slight sores
Need not a plaintain; that which rips my bosom,
Almost to th' heart, 's,—

Arc. Our uncle Creon.

Pal. He,
A most unbounded tyrant, whose successes
Make heaven unfear'd, and villainy assur'd
Beyond its power there's nothing; almost puts
Faith in a fever, and deifies alone
Voluble chance; who only attributes
The faculties of other instruments
To his own nerves and act; commands men's service,
And what they win in't, boot and glory too;
That fears not to do harm; good dares not: let
The blood of mine that's sib to him be suck'd
From me with leeches; let them break and fall
Off me with that corruption!

Arc. Clear-spirited cousin,
Let's leave his court, that we may nothing share
Of his loud infamy; for our milk
Will relish of the pasture, and we must
Be vile or disobedient; not his kinsmen
In blood, unless in quality.

Pal. Nothing truer:
I think the echoes of his shames have deaf'd
The ears of heavenly justice: widows' cries
Descend again into their throats, and have not
Due audience of the gods.— Valerius!

Enter VALERIUS.

Val. The king calls for you ; yet be leaden-footed,
Till his great rage be off him : Phœbus when
He broke his whipstock, and exclaim'd against
The horses of the sun, but whisper'd, to
The loudness of his fury.
Pal. Small winds shake him :
But what's the matter ? [sent
Val. Theseus — who where he threats appals — hath
Deadly defiance to him, and pronounces
Ruin to Thebes ; who is at hand to seal
The promise of his wrath.
Arc. Let him approach :
But that we fear the gods in him, he brings not
A jot of terror to us : yet what man
Thirds his own worth — the case is each of ours —
When that his action's dregg'd with mind assur'd
'Tis bad he goes about ?
Pal. Leave that unreason'd ;
Our services stand now for Thebes, not Creon :
Yet, to be neutral to him were dishonor,
Rebellious to oppose ; therefore we must
With him stand to the mercy of our fate,
Who hath bounded our last minute.
Arc. So we must.—
Is't said this war's afoot ? or it shall be,
On fail of some condition ?
Val. 'Tis in motion ;
Th' intelligence of state came in the instant
With the defier.
Pal. Let's to the king ; who, were he
A quarter carrier of that honor which
His enemy comes in, the blood we venture
Should be as for our health ; which were not spent,
Rather laid out for purchase : but, alas,
Our hands advanc'd before our hearts, what will
The fall o' the stroke do damage ?
Arc. Let th' event,
That never-erring arbitrator, tell us
When we know all ourselves ; and let us follow
The becking of our chance. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Before the gates of Athens.*

Enter PIRITHOUS, HIPPOLYTA, *and* EMILIA.

Pir. No further!
Hip. Sir, farewell: repeat my wishes
To our great lord, of whose success I dare not
Make any timorous question; yet I wish him
Excess and overflow of power, an't might be,
To dare ill-dealing fortune. Speed to him;
Store never hurts good governors.
Pir. Though I know
His ocean needs not my poor drops, yet they
Must yield their tribute there. My precious maid,
Those best affections that the heavens infuse
In their best-temper'd pieces, keep enthron'd
In your dear heart!
Emi. Thanks, sir. Remember me
To our all-royal brother; for whose speed
The great Bellona I'll solicit; and
Since, in our terrene state, petitions are not
Without gifts understood, I'll offer to her
What I shall be advis'd she likes. Our hearts
Are in his army, in his tent.
Hip. In's bosom.
We have been soldiers, and we cannot weep
When our friends don their helms, or put to sea,
Or tell of babes broach'd on the lance, or women
That have sod their infants in — and after eat them —
The brine they wept at killing 'em: then, if
You stay to see of us such spinsters, we
Should hold you here for ever.
Pir. Peace be to you,
As I pursue this war! which shall be then
Beyond further requiring. [*Exit.*
Emi. How his longing
Follows his friend! since his depart, his sports,
Though craving seriousness and skill, pass'd slightly
His careless execution, where nor gain
Made him regard, or loss consider; but
Playing one business in his hand, another
Directing in his head, his mind nurse equal

To these so differing twins. Have you observ'd him
Since our great lord departed?
Hip. With much labor;
And I did love him for't. They two have cabin'd
In many as dangerous as poor a corner,
Peril and want contending; they have skiff'd
Torrents, whose roaring tyranny and power
I' the least of these was dreadful; and they have
Fought out together, where death's self was lodg'd;
Yet faith hath brought them off. Their knot of love
Tied, weav'd, entangled, with so true, so long,
And with a finger of so deep a cunning,
May be out-worn, never undone. I think
Theseus cannot be umpire to himself,
Cleaving his conscience into twain, and doing
Each side like justice, which he loves best.
Emi. Doubtless
There is a best, and reason has no manners
To say it is not you. I was acquainted
Once with a time, when I enjoy'd a playfellow;
You were at wars when she the grave enrich'd,
Who made too proud the bed, took leave o' the moon —
Which then look'd pale at parting — when our count
Was each eleven.
Hip. 'Twas Flavina.
Emi. Yes.
You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love:
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely season'd,
More buckled with strong judgment, and their needs
The one of th' other may be said to water
Their intertangled roots of love; but I,
And she I sigh and spoke of, were things innocent,
Lov'd for we did, and like the elements
That know not what nor why, yet do effect
Rare issues by their operance, our souls
Did so to one another: what she lik'd
Was then of me approv'd; what not, condemn'd,
No more arraignment; the flower that I would pluck
And put between my breasts — then but beginning
To swell about the blossom — she would long
Till she had such another, and commit it
To the like innocent cradle, where, phenix-like,

They died in perfume ; on my head no toy
But was her pattern ; her affections — pretty,
Though happily her careless wear — I follow'd
For my most serious decking ; had mine ear
Stol'n some new air, or at adventure humm'd one
From musical coinage, why, it was a note
Whereon her spirits would sojourn,— rather dwell on,
And sing it in her slumbers : this rehearsal —
Which, every innocent wots well, comes in
Like old importment's bastard — has this end,
That the true love 'tween maid and maid may be
More than in sex dividual.

Hip. You're out of breath ;
And this high-speeded pace is but to say,
That you shall never, like the maid Flavina,
Love any that's call'd man.

Emi. I'm sure I shall not.

Hip. Now, alack, weak sister,
I must no more believe thee in this point —
Though in't I know thou dost believe thyself —
Than I will trust a sickly appetite,
That loathes even as it longs. But, sure, my sister,
If I were ripe for your persuasion, you
Have said enough to shake me from the arm
Of the all-noble Theseus ; for whose fortunes
I will now in and kneel, with great assurance
That we, more than his Pirithous, possess
The high throne in his heart.

Emi. I am not
Against your faith ; yet I continue mine. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A field before Thebes. Dead bodies lying on the ground; among them* PALAMON *and* ARCITE.

A battle struck within ; then a retreat ; then a flourish. Then enter THESEUS (*victor*), Herald, *and* Attendants. *The three* Queens *meet* THESEUS, *and fall on their faces before him.*

First Queen. To thee no star be dark !

Sec. Queen. Both heaven and earth
Friend thee for ever !

Third Queen. All the good that may
Be wish'd upon thy head, I cry Amen to't!
Thes. Th' impartial gods, who from the mounted heavens
View us their mortal herd, behold who err,
And in their time chastise. Go, and find out
The bones of your dead lords, and honor them
With treble ceremony: rather than a gap
Should be in their dear rites, we would supply't.
But those we will depute which shall invest
You in your dignities, and even each thing
Our haste does leave imperfect. So, adieu,
And heaven's good eyes look on you! [*Exeunt Queens.*
What are those?
Herald. Men of great quality, as may be judg'd
By their appointment; some of Thebes have told's
They're sisters' children, nephews to the king.
Thes. By th' helm of Mars, I saw them in the war —
Like to a pair of lions smear'd with prey —
Make lanes in troops aghast: I fix'd my note
Constantly on them; for they were a mark
Worth a god's view. What was't that prisoner told me
When I inquir'd their names?
Herald. We learn they're call'd
Arcite and Palamon.
Thes. 'Tis right; those, those.
They are not dead?
Herald. Nor in a state of life: had they been taken
When their last hurts were given, 'twas possible
They might have been recover'd; yet they breathe,
And have the name of men.
Thes. Then like men use 'em:
The very lees of such, millions of rates
Exceed the wine of others: all our surgeons
Convent in their behoof; our richest balms,
Rather than niggard, waste: their lives concern us
Much more than Thebes is worth: rather than have 'em
Freed of this plight, and in their morning state,
Sound and at liberty, I would 'em dead;
But, forty thousand fold, we had rather have 'em
Prisoners to us than death. Bear 'em speedily
From our kind air, — to them unkind, — and minister

What man to man may do; for our sake, more:
Since I have known fight's fury, friends' behests,
Love's provocations, zeal in a mistress' task,
Desire of liberty, a fever, madness,
'T hath set a mark which nature could not reach to
Without some imposition, sickness in will,
Or wrestling strength in reason. For our love,
And great Apollo's mercy, all our best
Their best skill tender! — Lead into the city;
Where, having bound things scatter'd, we will post
To Athens 'fore our army. [*Flourish. Exeunt; Attendants carrying Palamon and Arcite.*

SCENE V. *Another part of the same, more remote from Thebes.*

Enter the three Queens *with the hearses of their husbands in a funeral solemnity, &c.*

SONG.

Urns and odors bring away!
Vapors, sighs, darken the day!
Our dole more deadly looks than dying;
Balms, and gums, and heavy cheers,
Sacred vials fill'd with tears,
And clamors through the wild air flying!

Come, all sad and solemn shows,
That are quick-ey'd pleasure's foes:
We convent naught else but woes:
We convent, &c.

Third Queen. This funeral path brings to your household's grave:
Joy seize on you again! Peace sleep with him!
Sec. Queen. And this to yours.
First Queen. Yours this way. Heavens lend
A thousand differing ways to one sure end.
Third Queen. This world's a city full of straying streets,
And death's the market-place, where each one meets.
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Athens. A garden, with a castle in the back ground.*

Enter Gaoler *and* Wooer.

Gaoler. I may depart with little, while I live; something I may cast to you, not much. Alas, the prison I keep, though it be for great ones, yet they seldom come: before one salmon, you shall take a number of minnows. I am given out to be better lined than it can appear to me report is a true speaker: I would I were really that I am delivered to be. Marry, what I have — be it what it will — I will assure upon my daughter at the day of my death.

Wooer. Sir, I demand no more than your own offer; and I will estate your daughter in what I have promised.

Gaoler. Well, we will talk more of this when the solemnity is past. But have you a full promise of her? when that shall be seen, I tender my consent.

Wooer. I have, sir. Here she comes.

Enter Gaoler's Daughter *with strewings.*

Gaoler. Your friend and I have chanced to name you here, upon the old business; but no more of that now: so soon as the court-hurry is over, we will have an end of it: i' the mean time, look tenderly to the two prisoners; I can tell you they are princes.

Daugh. These strewings are for their chamber. 'Tis pity they are in prison, and 'twere pity they should be out. I do think they have patience to make any adversity ashamed: the prison itself is proud of 'em; and they have all the world in their chamber.

Gaoler. They are famed to be a pair of absolute men.

Daugh. By my troth, I think fame but stammers 'em; they stand a grise above the reach of report.

Gaoler. I heard them reported in the battle to be the only doers.

Daugh. Nay, most likely; for they are noble sufferers. I marvel how they would have looked, had they been victors, that with such a constant nobility enforce a freedom

out of bondage, making misery their mirth, and affliction a toy to jest at.

Gaoler. Do they so?

Daugh. It seems to me they have no more sense of their captivity than I of ruling Athens: they eat well, look merrily, discourse of many things, but nothing of their own restraint and disasters. Yet sometime a divided sigh, martyred as 'twere i' the deliverance, will break from one of them; when the other presently gives it so sweet a rebuke, that I could wish myself a sigh to be so chid, or at least a sigher to be comforted.

Wooer. I never saw 'em.

Gaoler. The duke himself came privately in the night, and so did they: what the reason of it is, I know not.

PALAMON *and* ARCITE *appear at a window of* a *tower.*

Look, yonder they are? that's Arcite looks out.

Daugh. No, sir, no; that's Palamon: Arcite is the lower of the twain; you may perceive a part of him.

Gaoler. Go to! leave your pointing: they would not make us their object: out of their sight!

Daugh. It is a holiday to look on them. Lord, the difference of men! [*Exit with Gaoler and Wooer.*

Pal. How do you, noble cousin?

Arc. How do you, sir?

Pal. Why, strong enough to laugh at misery,
And bear the chance of war yet. We are prisoners
I fear for ever, cousin.

Arc. I believe it;
And to that destiny have patiently
Laid up my hour to come.

Pal. O, cousin Arcite,
Where is Thebes now? where is our noble country?
Where are our friends and kindreds? Never more
Must we behold those comforts; never see
The hardy youths strive for the games of honor,
Hung with the painted favors of their ladies,
Like tall ships under sail; then start amongst 'em,
And, as an east wind, leave 'em all behind us
Like lazy clouds, whilst Palamon and Arcite,
Even in the wagging of a wanton leg,
Outstripp'd the people's praises, won the garlands,

Ere they have time to wish 'em ours. O, never
Shall we two exercise, like twins of honor,
Our arms again, and feel our fiery horses
Like proud seas under us! Our good swords now,—
Better the red-ey'd god of war ne'er ware,—
Ravish'd our sides, like age, must run to rust,
And deck the temples of those gods that hate us;
These hands shall never draw 'em out like lightning,
To blast whole armies, more!

Arc. No, Palamon,
Those hopes are prisoners with us: here we are,
And here the graces of our youths must wither,
Like a too-timely spring; here age must find us,
And, which is heaviest, Palamon, unmarried;
The sweet embraces of a loving wife,
Loaden with kisses, arm'd with thousand Cupids,
Shall never clasp our necks; no issue know us,
No figures of ourselves shall we e'er see,
To glad our age, and like young eagles teach 'em
Boldly to gaze against bright arms, and say
"Remember what your fathers were, and conquer!"
The fair-ey'd maids shall weep our banishments,
And in their songs curse ever-blinded Fortune,
Till she for shame see what a wrong she has done
To youth and nature: this is all our world;
We shall know nothing here but one another;
Hear nothing but the clock that tells our woes;
The vine shall grow, but we shall never see it;
Summer shall come, and with her all delights,
But dead-cold winter must inhabit here still.

Pal. 'Tis too true, Arcite. To our Theban hounds,
That shook the agèd forest with their echoes,
No more now must we holla; no more shake
Our pointed javelins, whilst the angry swine
Flies like a Parthian quiver from our rages,
Stuck with our well-steel'd darts; all valiant uses—
The food and nourishment of noble minds—
In us two here shall perish; we shall die—
Which is the curse of honor—lastly,
Children of grief and ignorance.

Arc. Yet, cousin,
Even from the bottom of these miseries,

From all that fortune can inflict upon us,
I see two comforts rising, two mere blessings,
If the gods please to hold here,— a brave patience,
And the enjoying of our griefs together.
Whilst Palamon is with me, let me perish
If I think this our prison!

Pal. Certainly
'Tis a main goodness, cousin, that our fortunes
Were twin'd together: 'tis most true, two souls
Put in two noble bodies, let 'em suffer
The gall of hazard, so they grow together,
Will never sink; they must not; say they could,
A willing man dies sleeping, and all's done.

Arc. Shall we make worthy uses of this place,
That all men hate so much?

Pal. How, gentle cousin?

Arc. Let's think this prison holy sanctuary,
To keep us from corruption of worse men:
We're young, and yet desire the ways of honor;
That, liberty and common conversation,
The poison of pure spirits, might, like women,
Woo us to wander from. What worthy blessing
Can be, but our imaginations
May make it ours? and here being thus together,
We are an endless mine to one another;
We're one another's wife, ever begetting
New births of love; we're father, friends, acquaintance;
We are, in one another, families;
I am your heir, and you are mine; this place
Is our inheritance; no hard oppressor
Dare take this from us: here, with a little patience,
We shall live long, and loving; no surfeits seek us;
The hand of war hurts none here, nor the seas
Swallow their youth. Were we at liberty,
A wife might part us lawfully, or business;
Quarrels consume us; envy of ill men
Grave our acquaintance; I might sicken, cousin,
Where you should never know it, and so perish
Without your noble hand to close mine eyes,
Or prayers to the gods: a thousand chances,
Were we from hence, would sever us.

Pal. You've made me —

I thank you, cousin Arcite — almost wanton
With my captivity : what a misery
It is to live abroad, and every where !
'Tis like a beast, methinks : I find the court here,
I'm sure, a more content ; and all those pleasures
That woo the wills of men to vanity
I see through now ; and am sufficient
To tell the world 'tis but a gaudy shadow,
That old Time, as he passes by, takes with him.
What had we been, old in the court of Creon,
Where sin is justice, lust and ignorance
The virtues of the great ones ? Cousin Arcite,
Had not the loving gods found this place for us,
We had died as they do, ill old men, unwept,
And had their epitaphs, the people's curses.
Shall I say more ?
Arc. I'd hear you still.
Pal. Ye shall.
Is there record of any two that lov'd
Better than we do, Arcite ?
Arc. Sure, there cannot.
Pal. I do not think it possible our friendship
Should ever leave us.
Arc. Till our deaths it cannot ;
And after death our spirits shall be led
To those that love eternally. Speak on, sir.

Enter EMILIA *and* Waiting-woman *below.*

Emi. This garden has a world of pleasures in't.
What flower is this ?
Wait.-w. 'Tis call'd narcissus, madam.
Emi. That was a fair boy certain, but a fool
To love himself : were there not maids enough ?
Arc. Pray, forward.
Pal. Yes.
Emi. Or were they all hard-hearted ?
Wait.-w. They could not be to one so fair.
Emi. Thou wouldst not.
Wait.-w. I think I should not, madam.
Emi. That's a good wench !
But take heed to your kindness though !
Wait.-w. Why, madam ?

Emi. Men are mad things.
Arc. Will ye go forward, cousin?
Emi. Canst not thou work such flowers in silk, wench?
Wait.-w. Yes.
Emi. I'll have a gown full of 'em; and of these;
This is a pretty color: will't not do
Rarely upon a skirt, wench?
Wait.-w. Dainty, madam.
Arc. Cousin, cousin! how do you, sir? why, Palamon!
Pal. Never till now I was in prison, Arcite.
Arc. Why, what's the matter, man?
Pal. Behold, and wonder!
By heaven, she is a goddess!
Arc. Ha!
Pal. Do reverence;
She is a goddess, Arcite!
Emi. Of all flowers,
Methinks, a rose is best.
Wait.-w. Why, gentle madam?
Emi. It is the very emblem of a maid:
For when the west wind courts her gently,
How modestly she blows, and paints the sun
With her chaste blushes! when the north comes near her,
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,
She locks her beauties in her bud again,
And leaves him to base briers.
Wait.-w. Yet, good madam,
Sometimes her modesty will blow so far
She falls for it: a maid,
If she have any honor, would be loath
To take example by her.
Emi. Thou art wanton.
Arc. She's wondrous fair!
Pal. She's all the beauty extant!
Emi. The sun grows high; let's walk in. Keep these flowers;
We'll see how near art can come near their colors.
I'm wondrous merry-hearted; I could laugh now.
Wait.-w. I could lie down, I'm sure.
Emi. And take one with you?
Wait.-w. That's as we bargain, madam.

Emi. Well, agree then.
[*Exit with Waiting-woman.*
Pal. What think you of this beauty?
Arc. 'Tis a rare one.
Pal. Is't but a rare one?
Arc. Yes, a matchless beauty.
Pal. Might not a man well lose himself, and love her?
Arc. I cannot tell what you have done; I have,
Beshrew mine eyes for't! Now I feel my shackles.
Pal. You love her, then?
Arc. Who would not?
Pal. And desire her?
Arc. Before my liberty.
Pal. I saw her first.
Arc. That's nothing.
Pal. But it shall be.
Arc. I saw her too.
Pal. Yes; but you must not love her.
Arc. I will not, as you do, to worship her,
As she is heavenly and a blessèd goddess;
I love her as a woman, to enjoy her:
So both may love.
Pal. You shall not love at all.
Arc. Not love at all! who shall deny me?
Pal. I, that first saw her; I, that took possession
First with mine eye of all those beauties in her
Reveal'd to mankind. If thou lovest her,
Or entertain'st a hope to blast my wishes,
Thou art a traitor, Arcite, and a fellow
False as thy title to her: friendship, blood,
And all the ties between us, I disclaim,
If thou once think upon her!
Arc. Yes, I love her;
And if the lives of all my name lay on it,
I must do so; I love her with my soul.
If that will lose ye, farewell, Palamon!
I say again, I love; and, in loving her, maintain
I am as worthy and as free a lover,
And have as just a title to her beauty,
As any Palamon, or any living
That is a man's son.
Pal. Have I call'd thee friend?

Arc. Yes, and have found me so. Why are you
mov'd thus?
Let me deal coldly with you: am not I
Part of your blood, part of your soul? you've told me
That I was Palamon, and you were Arcite.
Pal. Yes.
Arc. Am not I liable to those affections,
Those joys, griefs, angers, fears, my friend shall suffer?
Pal. Ye may be.
Arc. Why, then, would you deal so cunningly,
So strangely, so unlike a noble kinsman,
To love alone? Speak truly; do you think me
Unworthy of her sight?
Pal. No; but unjust
If thou pursue that sight.
Arc. Because another
First sees the enemy, shall I stand still,
And let mine honor down, and never charge?
Pal. Yes, if he be but one.
Arc. But say that one
Had rather combat me?
Pal. Let that one say so,
And use thy freedom: else, if thou pursu'st her,
Be as that cursèd man that hates his country,
A branded villain!
Arc. You are mad.
Pal. I must be,
Till thou art worthy, Arcite; it concerns me;
And, in this madness, if I hazard thee
And take thy life, I deal but truly.
Arc. Fie, sir!
You play the child extremely: I will love her,
I must, I ought to do so, and I dare;
And all this justly.
Pal. O, that now, that now
Thy false self and thy friend had but this fortune,
To be one hour at liberty, and grasp
Our good swords in our hands! I'd quickly teach thee
What 'twere to filch affection from another!
Thou art baser in it than a cutpurse:
Put but thy head out of this window more,
And, as I have a soul, I'll nail thy life to't!

Arc. Thou dar'st not, fool; thou canst not; thou art feeble:
Put my head out! I'll throw my body out,
And leap the garden, when I see her next,
And pitch between her arms, to anger thee.
Pal. No more! the keeper's coming: I shall live
To knock thy brains out with my shackles.
Arc. Do!

Re-enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. By your leave, gentlemen.
Pal. Now, honest keeper?
Gaoler. Lord Arcite, you must presently to the duke:
The cause I know not yet.
Arc. I'm ready, keeper.
Gaoler. Prince Palamon, I must awhile bereave you
Of your fair cousin's company.
Pal. And me too,
Even when you please, of life. [*Exeunt Gaoler and Arcite.*
Why is he sent for?
It may be, he shall marry her; he's goodly,
And like enough the duke hath taken notice
Both of his blood and body. But his falsehood!
Why should a friend be treacherous? if that
Get him a wife so noble and so fair,
Let honest men ne'er love again. Once more
I would but see this fair one.— Blessèd garden,
And fruit and flowers more blessèd, that still blossom
As her bright eyes shine on ye! Would I were,
For all the fortune of my life hereafter,
Yon little tree, yon blooming apricock!
How I would spread, and fling my wanton arms
In at her window! I would bring her fruit
Fit for the gods to feed on; youth and pleasure,
Still as she tasted, should be doubled on her;
And if she be not heavenly, I would make her
So near the gods in nature, they should fear her;
And then I'm sure she would love me.

Re-enter Gaoler.

How now, keeper!
Where's Arcite?

Gaoler. Banish'd. Prince Pirithous
Obtain'd his liberty ; but never more,
Upon his oath and life, must he set foot
Upon this kingdom.
Pal. [*aside*] He's a blessèd man !
He shall see Thebes again, and call to arms
The bold young men that, when he bids 'em charge,
Fall on like fire : Arcite shall have a fortune,
If he dare make himself a worthy lover,
Yet in the field to strike a battle for her ;
And if he lose her then, he's a cold coward :
How bravely may he bear himself to win her,
If he be noble Arcite, thousand ways !
Were I at liberty, I would do things
Of such a virtuous greatness, that this lady,
This blushing virgin, should take manhood to her,
And seek to ravish me.
Gaoler. My lord, for you
I have this charge too —
Pal. To discharge my life ?
Gaoler. No ; but from this place to remove your lordship :
The windows are too open.
Pal. Devils take 'em
That are so envious to me ! Prithee, kill me.
Gaoler. And hang for't afterward ?
Pal. By this good light,
Had I a sword, I'd kill thee.
Gaoler. Why, my lord ?
Pal. Thou bring'st such pelting scurvy news continually,
Thou art not worthy life. I will not go.
Gaoler. Indeed, you must, my lord,
Pal. May I see the garden ?
Gaoler. No.
Pal. Then I'm resolv'd I will not go.
Gaoler. I must
Constrain you, then ; and, for you're dangerous,
I'll clap more irons on you.
Pal. Do, good keeper :
I'll shake 'em so, ye shall not sleep ;
I'll make ye a new morris. Must I go ?

Gaoler. There is no remedy.
Pal. [*aside*] Farewell, kind window ;
May rude wind never hurt thee ! — O my lady,
If ever thou hast felt what sorrow was,
Dream how I suffer ! — Come, now bury me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The country near Athens.*

Enter ARCITE.

Arc. Banish'd the kingdom ? 'tis a benefit,
A mercy, I must thank 'em for ; but banish'd
The free enjoying of that face I die for,
O, 'twas a studied punishment, a death
Beyond imagination ! such a vengeance,
That, were I old and wicked, all my sins
Could never pluck upon me. Palamon,
Thou hast the start now ; thou shalt stay, and see
Her bright eyes break each morning 'gainst thy window,
And let in life into thee ; thou shalt feed
Upon the sweetness of a noble beauty,
That nature ne'er exceeded, nor ne'er shall :
Good gods, what happiness has Palamon !
Twenty to one, he'll come to speak to her ;
And, if she be as gentle as she's fair,
I know she's his ; he has a tongue will tame
Tempests, and make the wild rocks wanton. Come what can come,
The worst is death ; I will not leave the kingdom :
I know mine own is but a heap of ruins,
And no redress there : if I go, he has her.
I am resolv'd : another shape shall make me,
Or end my fortunes ; either way, I'm happy :
I'll see her, and be near her, or no more.

Enter four Countrymen ; *one with a garland before them.*

First Coun. My masters, I'll be there, that's certain.
Sec. Coun. And I'll be there.
Third Coun. And I.
Fourth Coun. Why, then, have with ye, boys ! 'tis but a chiding :

Let the plow play to-day ; I'll tickle't out
Of the jades' tails to-morrow.
First Coun. I am sure
To have my wife as jealous as a turkey :
But that's all one : I'll go through, let her mumble.
Sec. Coun. Clap her aboard to-morrow night, and stow her,
And all's made up again.
Third Coun. Ay, do but put
A fescue in her fist, and you shall see her
Take a new lesson out, and be a good wench.
Do we all hold against the Maying ?
Fourth Coun. Hold !
What should ail us ?
Third Coun. Arcas will be there.
Sec. Coun. And Sennois,
And Rycas ; and three better lads ne'er danc'd
Under green tree ; and ye know what wenches, ha !
But will the dainty domine, the schoolmaster,
Keep touch, do you think ? for he does all, ye know.
Third Coun. He'll eat a hornbook, ere he fail : go to !
The matter is too far driven between
Him and the tanner's daughter, to let slip now ;
And she must see the duke, and she must dance too.
Fourth Coun. Shall we be lusty ?
Sec. Coun. All the boys in Athens
Blow wind i' the breech on us : and here I'll be,
And there I'll be, for our town, and here again,
And there again : ha, boys, heigh for the weavers !
First Coun. This must be done i' the woods.
Fourth Coun. O, pardon me !
Sec. Coun. By any means : our thing of learning says so ;
Where he himself will edify the duke
Most parlously in our behalfs : he's excellent i' the woods ;
Bring him to the plains, his learning makes no cry.
Third Coun. We'll see the sports ; then every man to's tackle !
And, sweet companions, let's rehearse by any means,
Before the ladies see us, and do sweetly,
And God knows what may come on't.

Fourth Coun. Content: the sports
Once ended, we'll perform. Away, boys, and hold!
Arc. By your leaves, honest friends; pray you, whithe-
er go you?
Fourth Coun. Whither! why, what a question's that!
Arc. Yes, 'tis a question
To me that know not.
Third Coun. To the games, my friend.
Sec. Coun. Where were you bred, you know it not?
Arc. Not far, sir.
Are there such games to-day?
First Coun. Yes, marry, are there;
And such as you never saw: the duke himself
Will be in person there.
Arc. What pastimes are they?
Sec. Coun. Wrestling and running.—'Tis a pretty fellow.
Third Coun. Thou wilt not go along?
Arc. Not yet, sir.
Fourth Coun. Well, sir,
Take your own time.— Come, boys.
First Coun. My mind misgives me
This fellow has a vengeance-trick o' the hip;
Mark how his body's made for't.
Sec. Coun. I'll be hang'd though,
If he dare venture; hang him, plum-porridge!
He wrestle? he roast eggs! Come, let's be gone, lads.
[*Exeunt Countrymen.*
Arc. This is an offer'd opportunity
I durst not wish for. Well I could have wrestled,
The best men call'd it excellent; and run
Swifter than wind upon a field of corn,
Curling the wealthy ears, ever flew. I'll venture,
And in some poor disguise be there: who knows
Whether my brows may not be girt with garlands,
And happiness prefer me to a place
Where I may ever dwell in sight of her? [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Athens. A room in the prison.*

Enter Gaoler's daughter.

Daugh. Why should I love this gentleman? 'tis odds
He never will affect me: I am base,

My father the mean keeper of his prison,
And he a prince : to marry him is hopeless,
To be his whore is witless. Out upon't!
What pushes are we wenches driven to,
When fifteen once has found us! First, I saw him ;
I, seeing, thought he was a goodly man ;
He has as much to please a woman in him —
If he please to bestow it so — as ever
These eyes yet look'd on : next I pitied him ;
And so would any young wench, o' my conscience,
That ever dream'd, or vow'd her maidenhead
To a young handsome man : then I lov'd him,
Extremely lov'd him, infinitely lov'd him ;
And yet he had a cousin, fair as he too :
But in my heart was Palamon, and there,
Lord, what a coil he keeps! To hear him
Sing in an evening, what a heaven it is!
And yet his songs are sad ones. Fairer spoken
Was never gentleman : when I come in
To bring him water in a morning, first
He bows his noble body, then salutes me thus,
" Fair, gentle maid, good morrow : may thy goodness
Get thee a happy husband!" Once he kiss'd me ;
I lov'd my lips the better ten days after :
Would he would do so every day! He grieves much,
And me as much to see his misery :
What should I do, to make him know I love him?
For I would fain enjoy him : say I ventur'd
To set him free? what says the law, then?
Thus much for law, or kindred! I will do it ;
And this night or to-morrow he shall love me. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *An open place in Athens. A short flourish of cornets, and shouts within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PIRITHOUS, EMILIA ; ARCITE *disguised, wearing a garland ; and* Countrymen.

Thes. You have done worthily ; I have not seen,
Since Hercules, a man of tougher sinews :
Whate'er you are, you run the best, and wrestle,
That these times can allow.

Arc. I'm proud to please you.
Thes. What country bred you?
Arc. This; but far off, prince.
Thes. Are you a gentleman?
Arc. My father said so;
And to those gentle uses gave me life.
Thes. Are you his heir?
Arc. His youngest, sir.
Thes. Your father,
Sure, is a happy sire, then. What proves you?
Arc. A little of all noble qualities:
I could have kept a hawk, and well have holla'd
To a deep cry of dogs; I dare not praise
My feat in horsemanship, yet they that knew me
Would say it was my best piece; last and greatest,
I would be thought a soldier.
Thes. You are perfect.
Pir. Upon my soul, a proper man!
Emi. He is so.
Pir. How do you like him, lady?
Hip. I admire him:
I have not seen so young a man so noble,
If he say true, of his sort.
Emi. Believe
His mother was a wondrous handsome woman;
His face methinks goes that way.
Hip. But his body
And fiery mind illustrate a brave father.
Pir. Mark how his virtue, like a hidden sun,
Breaks through his baser garments!
Hip. He's well got, sure.
Thes. What made you seek this place, sir?
Arc. Noble Theseus,
To purchase name, and do my ablest service
To such a well-found wonder as thy worth;
For only in thy court, of all the world,
Dwells fair-ey'd Honor.
Pir. All his words are worthy.
Thes. Sir, we are much indebted to your travel,
Nor shall you lose your wish.— Pirithous,
Dispose of this fair gentleman.
Pir. Thanks, Theseus.—

Whate'er you are, you're mine: and I shall give you
To a most noble service,— to this lady,
This bright young virgin: pray, observe her goodness:
You've honor'd her fair birthday with your virtues,
And, as your due, you're hers; kiss her fair hand, sir.

Arc. Sir, you're a noble giver.— [*To Emilia*] Dearest
beauty, [your servant —
Thus let me seal my vow'd faith [*Kisses her hand*]: when
Your most unworthy creature — but offends you,
Command him die, he shall.

Emi. That were too cruel.
If you deserve well, sir, I shall soon see't:
You're mine; and somewhat better than your rank
I'll use you.

Pir. I'll see you furnish'd: and because you say
You are a horseman, I must needs entreat you
This afternoon to ride; but 'tis a rough one.

Arc. I like him better, prince; I shall not, then,
Freeze in my saddle.

Thes. Sweet, you must be ready,—
And you, Emilia,— and you, friend,— and all,—
To-morrow, by the sun, to do observance
To flowery May, in Dian's wood.— Wait well, sir,
Upon your mistress.— Emily, I hope
He shall not go a-foot.

Emi. That were a shame, sir,
While I have horses.— Take your choice; and what
You want at any time, let me but know it:
If you serve faithfully, I dare assure you
You'll find a loving mistress.

Arc. If I do not,
Let me find that my father ever hated,—
Disgrace and blows.

Thes. Go, lead the way; you've won it;
It shall be so: you shall receive all dues
Fit for the honor you have won; 'twere wrong else.—
Sister, beshrew my heart, you have a servant,
That, if I were a woman, would be master:
But you are wise.

Emi. I hope too wise for that, sir.
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Athens. Before the prison.*

Enter Gaoler's Daughter.

Daugh. Let all the dukes and all the devils roar
He is at liberty : I've ventur'd for him ;
And out I've brought him to a little wood
A mile hence : I have sent him, where a cedar,
Higher than all the rest, spreads like a plane,
Fast by a brook ; and there he shall keep close,
Till I provide him files and food ; for yet
His iron bracelets are not off. O Love,
What a stout-hearted child thou art ! My father
Durst better have endur'd cold iron than done it.
I love him beyond love and beyond reason,
Or wit, or safety ; I have made him know it :
I care not ; I am desperate : if the law
Find me, and then condemn me for't, some wenches,
Some honest-hearted maids will sing my dirge,
And tell to memory my death was noble,
Dying almost a martyr. That way he takes,
I purpose is my way too : sure he cannot
Be so unmanly as to leave me here :
If he do, maids will not so easily
Trust men again : and yet he has not thank'd me
For what I've done ; no, not so much as kiss'd me ;
And that, methinks, is not so well ; nor scarcely
Could I persuade him to become a freeman,
He made such scruples of the wrong he did
To me and to my father. Yet, I hope,
When he considers more, this love of mine
Will take more root within him : let him do
What he will with me, so he use me kindly ;
For use me so he shall, or I'll proclaim him,
And to his face, no man. I'll presently
Provide him necessaries, and pack my clothes up,
And where there is a path of ground I'll venture,
So he be with me : by him, like a shadow,
I'll ever dwell. Within this hour the whoobub
Will be all o'er the prison : I am then
Kissing the man they look for. Farewell, father !
Get many more such prisoners and such daughters,
And shortly you may keep yourself. Now to him ! [*Exit*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A forest near Athens. Cornets in sundry places: noise and hallooing, as of people a-Maying.*

Enter ARCITE.

Arc. The duke has lost Hippolyta; each took
A several land. This is a solemn rite
They owe bloom'd May, and the Athenians pay it
To th' heart of ceremony. O queen Emilia,
Fresher than May, sweeter
Than her gold buttons on the boughs, or all
Th' enamel'd knacks o' the mead or garden! yea,
We challenge too the bank of any nymph,
That makes the stream seem flowers; thou, O jewel
O' the wood, o' the world, hast likewise bless'd a place
With thy sole presence! In thy rumination
That I, poor man, might eftsoons come between,
And chop on some cold thought! thrice-blessèd chance,
To drop on such a mistress, expectation
Most guiltless on't. Tell me, O Lady Fortune,—
Next after Emily my sovereign,— how far
I may be proud. She takes strong note of me,
Hath made me near her, and this beauteous morn,
The prim'st of all the year, presents me with
A brace of horses; two such steeds might well
Be by a pair of kings back'd, in a field
That their crowns' titles tried. Alas, alas,
Poor cousin Palamon, poor prisoner! thou
So little dream'st upon my fortune, that
Thou think'st thyself the happier thing, to be
So near Emilia; me thou deem'st at Thebes,
And therein wretched, although free: but if
Thou knew'st my mistress breath'd on me, and that
I ear'd her language, liv'd in her eye, O coz,
What passion would inclose thee!

Enter PALAMON *out of a bush, with his shackles: he bends his fist at* ARCITE.

Pal. Traitor kinsman!
Thou shouldst perceive my passion, if these signs
Of prisonment were off me, and this hand

But owner of a sword. By all oaths in one,
I, and the justice of my love, would make thee
A confess'd traitor! O thou most perfidious
That ever gently look'd! the void'st of honor
That e'er bore gentle token! falsest cousin
That ever blood made kin! call'st thou her thine?
I'll prove it in my shackles, with these hands
Void of appointment, that thou liest, and art
A very thief in love, a chaffy lord,
Nor worth the name of villain! Had I a sword,
And these house-clogs away,—

Arc. Dear cousin Palamon,—

Pal. Cozener Arcite, give me language such
As thou hast show'd me feat!

Arc. Not finding in
The circuit of my breast any gross stuff
To form me like your blazon, holds me to
This gentleness of answer: 'tis your passion
That thus mistakes; the which, to you being enemy,
Cannot to me be kind. Honor and honesty
I cherish and depend on, howsoe'er
You skip them in me; and with them, fair coz,
I'll maintain my proceedings. Pray, be pleas'd
To show in generous terms your griefs, since that
Your question's with your equal, who professes
To clear his own way with the mind and sword
Of a true gentleman.

Pal. That thou durst, Arcite!

Arc. My coz, my coz, you have been well advertis'd
How much I dare: you've seen me use my sword
Against th' advice of fear. Sure, of another
You would not hear me doubted, but your silence
Should break out, though i' the sanctuary.

Pal. Sir,
I've seen you move in such a place, which well
Might justify your manhood; you were call'd
A good knight and a bold: but the whole week's not fair,
If any day it rain. Their valiant temper
Men lose when they incline to treachery;
And then they fight like compell'd bears, would fly
Were they not tied.

Arc. Kinsman, you might as well

Speak this, and act it in your glass, as to
His ear which now disdains you.
Pal. Come up to me:
Quit me of these cold gyves, give me a sword,
Though it be rusty, and the charity
Of one meal lend me; come before me then,
A good sword in thy hand, and do but say
That Emily is thine, I will forgive
The trespass thou hast done me, yea, my life,
If then thou carry't; and brave souls in shades,
That have died manly, which will seek of me
Some news from earth, they shall get none but this,
That thou art brave and noble.
Arc. Be content,
Again betake you to your hawthorn-house:
With counsel of the night, I will be here
With wholesome viands; these impediments
Will I file off; you shall have garments, and
Perfumes to kill the smell o' the prison; after,
When you shall stretch yourself, and say but, "Arcite,
I am in plight," there shall be at your choice
Both sword and armor.
Pal. O you heavens, dare any
So noble bear a guilty baseness? none
But only Arcite; therefore none but Arcite
In this kind is so bold.
Arc. Sweet Palamon,—
Pal. I do embrace you and your offer: for
Your offer do't I only, sir; your person,
Without hypocrisy, I may not wish
More than my sword's edge on't. [*Horns winded within.*
Arc. You hear the horns:
Enter your muset, lest this match between's
Be cross'd ere met. Give me your hand; farewell:
I'll bring you every needful thing: I pray you,
Take comfort, and be strong.
Pal. Pray, hold your promise,
And do the deed with a bent brow: most certain
You love me not: be rough with me, and pour
This oil out of your language. By this air,
I could for each word give a cuff; my stomach
Not reconcil'd by reason.

Arc. Plainly spoken!
Yet pardon me hard language: when I spur
My horse, I chide him not; content and anger
In me have but one face. [*Horns winded again.*
Hark, sir! they call
The scatter'd to the banquet: you must guess
I have an office there.
Pal. Sir, your attendance
Cannot please heaven; and I know your office
Unjustly is achiev'd.
Arc. I've a good title,
I am persuaded: this question, sick between's,
By bleeding must be cur'd. I am a suitor
That to your sword you will bequeath this plea,
And talk of it no more.
Pal. But this one word:
You're going now to gaze upon my mistress;
For, note you, mine she is,—
Arc. Nay, then,—
Pal. Nay, pray you,—
You talk of feeding me to breed me strength;
You're going now to look upon a sun
That strengthens what it looks on; there you have
A vantage o'er me: but enjoy it till
I may enforce my remedy. Farewell. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II. *Another part of the forest.*

Enter Gaoler's Daughter.

Daugh. He has mistook the brake I meant; is gone
After his fancy. 'Tis now well-nigh morning;
No matter: would it were perpetual night,
And darkness lord o' the world! — Hark! 'tis a wolf:
In me hath grief slain fear, and, but for one thing,
I care for nothing, and that's Palamon:
I reck not if the wolves would jaw me, so
He had this file. What if I holla'd for him?
I cannot holla: if I whoop'd, what then?
If he not answer'd, I should call a wolf,
And do him but that service. I have heard
Strange howls this live-long night: why may't not be
They have made prey of him? he has no weapons;

He cannot run; the jingling of his gyves
Might call fell things to listen, who have in them
A sense to know a man unarm'd, and can
Smell where resistance is. I'll set it down
He's torn to pieces; they howl'd many together,
And then they fed on him: so much for that:
Be bold to ring the bell; how stand I, then?
All's char'd when he is gone. No, no, I lie;
My father's to be hang'd for his escape;
Myself to beg, if I priz'd life so much
As to deny my act; but that I would not,
Should I try death by dozens.— I am mop'd:
Food took I none these two days; once, indeed.
I sipp'd some water; I've not clos'd mine eyes,
Save when my lids scour'd off their brine. Alas,
Dissolve, my life! let not my sense unsettle,
Lest I should drown, or stab, or hang myself!
O state of nature, fail together in me,
Since thy best props are warp'd! — So, which way now?
The best way is the next way to a grave:
Each errant step beside is torment. Lo,
The moon is down, the crickets chirp, the screech-owl
Calls in the dawn! all offices are done,
Save what I fail in; but the point is this,
An end, and that is all. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *The same part of the forest as in Scene I.*
Enter ARCITE, *with meat, wine, files, &c.*

Arc. I should be near the place.— Ho, cousin Palamon!

Enter PALAMON.

Pal. Arcite?
Arc. The same: I've brought you food and files.
Come forth and fear not: here's no Theseus.
Pal. Nor none so honest, Arcite.
Arc. That's no matter:
We'll argue that hereafter. Come, take courage;
You shall not die thus beastly: here, sir, drink;
I know you're faint; then I'll talk further with you.
Pal. Arcite, thou mightst now poison me.
Arc. I might;
But I must fear you first. Sit down; and, good, now,

No more of these vain parleys: let us not,
Having our ancient reputation with us,
Make talk for fools and cowards. To your health!
[*Drinks.*

Pal. Do.

Arc. Pray, sit down, then; and let me entreat you,
By all the honesty and honor in you,
No mention of this woman! 'twill disturb us;
We shall have time enough.

Pal. Well, sir, I'll pledge you.
[*Drinks.*

Arc. Drink a good hearty draught; it breeds good blood, man.
Do not you feel it thaw you?

Pal. Stay; I'll tell you
After a draught or two more.

Arc. Spare it not;
The duke has more, coz. Eat now.

Pal. Yes. [*Eats.*

Arc. I'm glad
You have so good a stomach.

Pal. I am gladder
I have so good meat to't.

Arc. Is't not mad lodging
Here in the wild woods, cousin?

Pal. Yes, for them
That have wild consciences.

Arc. How tastes your victuals?
Your hunger needs no sauce, I see.

Pal. Not much:
But if it did, yours is too tart, sweet cousin.
What is this?

Arc. Venison.

Pal. 'Tis a lusty meat.
Give me more wine: here, Arcite, to the wenches
We've known in our days! The lord-steward's daughter;
Do you remember her?

Arc. After you, coz.

Pal. She lov'd a black-hair'd man.

Arc. She did so: well, sir?

Pal. And I have heard some call him Arcite; and —

Arc. Out with it, faith!

Pal. She met him in an arbor:
What did she there, coz? play o' the virginals?
Arc. Something she did, sir.
Pal. Made her groan a month for't;
Or two, or three, or ten.
Arc. The marshal's sister
Had her share too, as I remember, cousin,
Else there be tales abroad: you'll pledge her?
Pal. Yes.
Arc. A pretty brown wench 'tis: there was a time
When young men went a-hunting, and a wood,
And a broad beech; and thereby hangs a tale.—
Heigh-ho!
Pal. For Emily, upon my life! Fool,
Away with this strain'd mirth! I say again,
That sigh was breath'd for Emily: base cousin,
Dar'st thou break first?
Arc. You're wide.
Pal. By heaven and earth,
There's nothing in thee honest.
Arc. Then I'll leave you:
You are a beast now.
Pal. As thou mak'st me, traitor.
Arc. There's all things needful,— files, and shirts, and perfumes:
I'll come again some two hours hence, and bring
That that shall quiet all.
Pal. A sword and armor?
Arc. Fear me not. You are now too foul: farewell:
Get off your trinkets; you shall want naught.
Pal. Sirrah,—
Arc. I'll hear no more. [*Exit.*
Pal. If he keep touch, he dies for't.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Another part of the forest.*

Enter Gaoler's Daughter.

Daugh. I'm very cold; and all the stars are out too,
The little stars, and all that look like aglets:
The sun has seen my folly. Palamon!
Alas, no! he's in heaven.— Where am I now?—

Yonder's the sea, and there's a ship; how't tumbles!
And there's a rock lies watching under water;
Now, now, it beats upon it; now, now, now,
There's a leak sprung, a sound one; how they cry!
Spoom her before the wind, you'll lose all else;
Up with a course or two, and tack about, boys:
Good night, good night; ye're gone.— I'm very hungry:
Would I could find a fine frog! he would tell me
News from all parts o' the world; then would I make
A carack of a cockle-shell, and sail
By east and north-east to the King of Pigmies,
For he tells fortunes rarely. Now, my father,
Twenty to one, is truss'd up in a trice
To-morrow morning: I'll say never a word. [*Sings.*

For I'll cut my green coat a foot above my knee;
And I'll clip my yellow locks an inch below mine e'e:
Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny.
He's buy me a white cut, forth for to ride,
And I'll go seek him through the world that is so wide:
Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny.

O for a prick now, like a nightingale,
To put my breast against! I shall sleep like a top else.
[*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Another part of the forest.*

Enter GERROLD, *four* Countrymen *as* Morris-dancers, *another as the* Bavian, *five* Wenches, *and a* Taborer.

Ger. Fie, fie!
What tediosity and disensanity
Is here among ye! Have my rudiments
Been labor'd so long with ye, milk'd unto ye,
And, by a figure, even the very plum-broth
And marrow of my understanding laid upon ye,
And do you still cry "Where," and "How," and "Wherefore?"
You most coarse frize capacities, ye jane judgments,
Have I said "Thus let be," and "There let be,"
And "Then let be," and no man understand me?
Proh Deum, medius fidius, ye are all dunces!

For why here stand I ; here the duke comes ; there are you,
Close in the thicket ; the duke appears ; I meet him,
And unto him I utter learnèd things
And many figures ; he hears, and nods, and hums,
And then cries "Rare;" and I go forward ; at length
I fling my cap up ; mark there! then do you,
As once did Meleager and the boar,
Break comely out before him, like true lovers,
Cast yourselves in a body decently,
And sweetly, by a figure, trace and turn, boys.
First Coun. And sweetly we will do it, Master Gerrold.
Sec. Coun. Draw up the company. Where's the taborer?
Third Coun. Why, Timothy!
Tab. Here, my mad boys ; have at ye!
Ger. But I say where's their women?
Fourth Coun. Here's Friz and Maudlin.
Sec. Coun. And little Luce with the white legs, and bouncing Barbary.
First Coun. And freckled Nell, that never fail'd her master.
Ger. Where be your ribands, maids? swim with your bodies,
And carry it sweetly and deliverly ;
And now and then a favor and a frisk.
Nell. Let us alone, sir.
Ger. Where's the rest o' the music?
Third Coun. Dispers'd as you commanded.
Ger. Couple, then,
And see what's wanting. Where's the Bavian?
My friend, carry your tail without offense
Or scandal to the ladies ; and be sure
You tumble with audacity and manhood ;
And when you bark, do it with judgment,
Bav. Yes, sir.
Ger. Quo usque tandem? here's a woman wanting.
Fourth Coun. We may go whistle ; all the fat's i' the fire.
Ger. We have,
As learnèd authors utter, wash'd a tile ;
We have been *fatuus*, and labor'd vainly.
Sec. Coun. This is that scornful piece, that scurvy hilding,

That gave her promise faithfully she would
Be here, Cicely the sempster's daughter :
The next gloves that I give her shall be dog-skin ;
Nay, an she fail me once — You can tell, Arcas,
She swore, by wine and bread, she would not break.
Ger. An eel and woman,
A learnèd poet says, unless by the tail
And with thy teeth thou hold, will either fail.
In manners this was false position.
First Coun. A fire ill take her ! does she flinch now ?
Third Coun. What
Shall we determine, sir ?
Ger. Nothing ;
Our business is become a nullity,
Yea, and a woful and a piteous nullity.
Fourth Coun. Now, when the credit of our town lay on it,
Now to be frampal, now to piss o' the nettle !
Go thy ways ; I'll remember thee, I'll fit thee !

Enter Gaoler's Daughter, *and sings.*

The George alow came from the south,
From the coast of Barbary-a ;
And there he met with brave gallants of war,
By one, by two, by three-a.

Well hail'd, well hail'd, you jolly gallants !
And whither now are you bound-a ?
O, let me have your company
Till I come to the Sound-a !

There was three fools fell out about an howlet :
The one said it was an owl ;
The other he said nay ;
The third he said it was a hawk,
And her bells were cut away.

Third Coun. There's a dainty mad woman, master,
Come i' the nick ; as mad as a March hare :
If we can get her dance, we're made again ;
I warrant her she'll do the rarest gambols.
First Coun. A mad woman ! we are made, boys.

Ger. And are you mad, good woman?
Daugh. I'd be sorry else.
Give me your hand.
Ger. Why?
Daugh. I can tell your fortune:
You are a fool. Tell ten. I've pos'd him. Buzz!
Friend, you must eat no white bread; if you do,
Your teeth will bleed extremely. Shall we dance, ho?
I know you; you're a tinker; sirrah tinker,
Stop no more holes but what you should.
Ger. *Dii boni!*
A tinker, damsel!
Daugh. Or a conjurer:
Raise me a devil now, and let him play
Qui passa o' the bells and bones.
Ger. Go, take her,
And fluently persuade her to a peace;
Et opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis —
Strike up and lead her in.
Sec. Coun. Come, lass, let's trip it.
Daugh. I'll lead.
Third Coun. Do, do. [*Horns winded within.*
Ger. Persuasively and cunningly; away, boys!
I hear the horns: give me some meditation,
And mark your cue. [*Exeunt all except Gerrold.*
Pallas inspire me!

Enter THESEUS, PIRITHOUS, HIPPOLYTA, EMILIA, ARCITE, *and Train.*

Thes. This way the stag took.
Ger. Stay and edify.
Thes. What have we here?
Pir. Some country sport, upon my life, sir.
Thes. Well, sir, go forward; we will edify.—
Ladies, sit down: we'll stay it.
Ger. Thou doughty duke, all hail! All hail, sweet ladies!
Thes. This is a cold beginning.
Ger. If you but favor, our country pastime made is.
We are a few of those collected here,
That ruder tongues distinguish villager;
And, to say verity and not to fable,
We are a merry rout, or else a rable,

Or company, or, by a figure, choris,
That 'fore thy dignity will dance a morris.
And I, that am the rectifier of all,
By title *pædagogus*, that let fall
The birch upon the breeches of the small ones,
And humble with a ferula the tall ones,
Do here present this machine, or this frame:
And, dainty duke, whose doughty dismal fame
From Dis to Dædalus, from post to pillar,
Is blown abroad, help me, thy poor well-willer,
And, with thy twinkling eyes, look right and straight
Upon this mighty *morr* — of mickle weight —
Is — now comes in, which being glu'd together
Makes *morris*, and the cause that we came hither,
The body of our sport, of no small study.
I first appear, though rude and raw and muddy,
To speak, before thy noble grace, this tenner;
At whose great feet I offer up my penner:
The next, the Lord of May and Lady bright,
The Chambermaid and Servingman, by night
That seek out silent hanging: then mine Host
And his fat spouse, that welcome to his cost
The gallèd traveler, and with a beck'ning
Inform the tapster to inflame the reck'ning:
Then the beast-eating Clown, and next the Fool,
The Bavian, with long tail and eke long tool;
Cum multis aliis that make a dance:
Say "Ay" and all shall presently advance.

Thes. Ay, ay, by any means, dear domine.

Pir. Produce.

Ger. Intrate, filii; come forth, and foot it.

Re-enter the four Countrymen, *the* Bavian, *the five* Wenches, *and the* Taborer, *accompanied by the* Gaoler's Daughter, *and others of both sexes. They dance a morris.*

Ladies, if we have been merry,
And have pleas'd ye with a derry,
And a derry, and a down,
Say the schoolmaster's no clown.
Duke, if we have pleas'd thee too,
And have done as good boys should do,

Give us but a tree or twain
For a Maypole, and again,
Ere another year run out,
We'll make thee laugh, and all this rout.

Thes. Take twenty, domine.— How does my sweetheart?

Hip. Never so pleas'd, sir.

Emi. 'Twas an excellent dance; and for a preface, I never heard a better.

Thes. Schoolmaster, I thank you.— One see 'em all rewarded.

Pir. And here's something [*Gives money.* To paint your pole withal.

Thes. Now to our sports again.

Ger. May the stag thou hunt'st stand long,
And thy dogs be swift and strong!
May they kill him without lets,
And the ladies eat his doucets!

[*Exeunt Theseus, Pirithous, Hippolyta, Emilia, Arcite, and Train. Horns winded as they go out.*

Come, we're all made. *Dii Deæque omnes!*
Ye have danc'd rarely, wenches. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The same part of the forest as in Scene III.*

Enter PALAMON *from the bush.*

Pal. About this hour my cousin gave his faith
To visit me again, and with him bring
Two swords and two good armors: if he fail,
He's neither man nor soldier. When he left me,
I did not think a week could have restor'd
My lost strength to me, I was grown so low
And crest-fall'n with my wants: I thank thee, Arcite,
Thou'rt yet a fair foe; and I feel myself,
With this refreshing, able once again
To outdure danger. To delay it longer
Would make the world think, when it comes to hearing,
That I lay fatting like a swine, to fight,
And not a soldier: therefore, this blest morning
Shall be the last; and that sword he refuses,
If it but hold, I kill him with; 'tis justice:
So, love and fortune for me!

Enter ARCITE *with armors and swords.*

O, good morrow.
Arc. Good morrow, noble kinsman.
Pal. I have put you
To too much pains, sir.
Arc. That too much, fair cousin,
Is but a debt to honor and my duty.
Pal. Would you were so in all, sir! I could wish ye
As kind a kinsman as you force me find
A beneficial foe, that my embraces
Might thank ye, not my blows.
Arc. I shall think either,
Well done, a noble recompense.
Pal. Then I shall quit you.
Arc. Defy me in these fair terms, and you show
More than a mistress to me: no more anger,
As you love any thing that's honorable:
We were not bred to talk, man; when we're arm'd,
And both upon our guards, then let our fury,
Like meeting of two tides, fly strongly from us;
And then to whom the birthright of this beauty
Truly pertains — without upbraidings, scorns,
Despisings of our persons, and such poutings,
Fitter for girls and schoolboys — will be seen,
And quickly, yours or mine. Wilt please you arm, sir?
Or, if you feel yourself not fitting yet,
And furnish'd with your old strength, I'll stay, cousin,
And every day discourse you into health,
As I am spar'd: your person I am friends with;
And I could wish I had not said I lov'd her,
Though I had died; but, loving such a lady,
And justifying my love, I must not fly from't.
Pal. Arcite, thou art so brave an enemy,
That no man but thy cousin's fit to kill thee:
I'm well and lusty; choose your arms.
Arc. Choose you, sir.
Pal. Wilt thou exceed in all, or dost thou do it
To make me spare thee?
Arc. If you think so, cousin,
You are deceiv'd; for, as I am a soldier,
I will not spare you.

Pal. That's well said.
Arc. You'll find it.
Pal. Then, as I am an honest man, and love
With all the justice of affection,
I'll pay thee soundly. This I'll take.
Arc. That's mine, then.
I'll arm you first. [*Proceeds to put on Palamon's armor.*
Pal. Do. Pray thee, tell me, cousin,
Where gott'st thou this good armor?
Arc. 'Tis the duke's;
And, to say true, I stole't. Do I pinch you?
Pal. No.
Arc. Is't not too heavy?
Pal. I have worn a lighter;
But I shall make it serve.
Arc. I'll buckle't close.
Pal. By any means.
Arc. You care not for a grand-guard?
Pal. No, no; we'll use no horses: I perceive
You'd fain be at that fight.
Arc. I am indifferent.
Pal. Faith, so am I. Good cousin, thrust the buckle
Through far enough.
Arc. I warrant you.
Pal. My casque now.
Arc. Will you fight bare-arm'd?
Pal. We shall be the nimbler.
Arc. But use your gauntlets though: those are o' the least;
Prithee, take mine, good cousin.
Pal. Thank you, Arcite.
How do I look? am I fall'n much away?
Arc. Faith, very little; Love has us'd you kindly.
Pal. I'll warrant thee I'll strike home.
Arc. Do, and spare not.
I'll give you cause, sweet cousin.
Pal. Now to you, sir.
[*Proceeds to put on Arcite's armor.*
Methinks this armor's very like that, Arcite,
Thou wor'st that day the three kings fell, but lighter.
Arc. That was a very good one; and that day,
I well remember, you outdid me, cousin;

I never saw such valor: when you charg'd
Upon the left wing of the enemy,
I spurr'd hard to come up, and under me
I had a right good horse.
Pal. You had indeed;
A bright bay, I remember.
Arc. Yes. But all
Was vainly labor'd in me; you outwent me,
Nor could my wishes reach you: yet a little
I did by imitation.
Pal. More by virtue;
You're modest, cousin.
Arc. When I saw you charge first,
Methought I heard a dreadful clap of thunder
Break from the troop.
Pal. But still before that flew
The lightning of your valor. Stay a little:
Is not this piece too strait?
Arc. No, no; 'tis well.
Pal. I would have nothing hurt thee but my sword;
A bruise would be dishonor.
Arc. Now I'm perfect.
Pal. Stand off, then.
Arc. Take my sword; I hold it better.
Pal. I thank ye, no; keep it; your life lies on it:
Here's one, if it but hold, I ask no more
For all my hopes. My cause and honor guard me!
Arc. And me my love!
[*They bow several ways; then advance and stand.*
Is there aught else to say?
Pal. This only, and no more. Thou art mine aunt's son,
And that blood we desire to shed is mutual;
In me thine, and in thee mine: my sword
Is in my hand, and, if thou killest me,
The gods and I forgive thee: if there be
A place prepar'd for those that sleep in honor,
I wish his weary soul that falls may win it.
Fight bravely, cousin: give me thy noble hand.
Arc. Here, Palamon: this hand shall never more
Come near thee with such friendship.
Pal. I commend thee.
Arc. If I fall, curse me, and say I was a coward;

For none but such dare die in these just trials.
Once more, farewell, my cousin.
Pal. Farewell, Arcite.
[*They fight. Horns winded within: they stand.*
Arc. Lo, cousin, lo! our folly has undone us.
Pal. Why?
Arc. This is the duke, a-hunting as I told you;
If we be found, we're wretched; O, retire,
For honor's sake and safety, presently
Into your bush again, sir; we shall find
Too many hours to die in. Gentle cousin,
If you be seen, you perish instantly
For breaking prison; and I, if you reveal me,
For my contempt: then all the world will scorn us,
And say we had a noble difference,
But base disposers of it.
Pal. No, no, cousin;
I will no more be hidden, nor put off
This great adventure to a second trial:
I know your cunning and I know your cause:
He that faints now, shame take him! Put thyself
Upon thy present guard,—
Arc. You are not mad?
Pal. Or I will make th' advantage of this hour
Mine own; and what to come shall threaten me,
I fear less than my fortune. Know, weak cousin,
I love Emilia; and in that I'll bury
Thee, and all crosses else.
Arc. Then, come what can come,
Thou shalt know, Palamon, I dare as well
Die as discourse or sleep: only this fears me,
The law will have the honor of our ends.
Have at thy life!
Pal. Look to thine own well, Arcite.
[*They fight. Horns winded within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EMILIA, PIRITHOUS, *and Train.*

Thes. What ignorant and mad-malicious traitors
Are you, that, 'gainst the tenor of my laws,
Are making battle, thus like knights appointed,

Without my leave, and officers of arms?
By Castor, both shall die.
Pal. Hold thy word, Theseus:
We're certainly both traitors, both despisers
Of thee and of thy goodness: I am Palamon,
That cannot love thee, he that broke thy prison;
Think well what that deserves: and this is Arcite;
A bolder traitor never trod thy ground,
A falser ne'er seem'd friend: this is the man
Was begg'd and banish'd: this is he contemns thee
And what thou dar'st do; and in this disguise,
Against thy own edict, follows thy sister,
That fortunate bright star, the fair Emilia;
Whose servant — if there be a right in seeing,
And first bequeathing of the soul to — justly
I am; and, which is more, dares think her his.
This treachery, like a most trusty lover,
I call'd him now to answer: if thou be'st,
As thou art spoken, great and virtuous,
The true decider of all injuries,
Say "Fight again!" and thou shalt see me, Theseus,
Do such a justice thou thyself wilt envy:
Then take my life; I'll woo thee to't.
Pir. O heaven,
What more than man is this!
Thes. I've sworn.
Arc. We seek not
Thy breath of mercy, Theseus: 'tis to me
A thing as soon to die as thee to say it,
And no more mov'd. Where this man calls me traitor,
Let me say thus much: if in love be treason,
In service of so excellent a beauty,
As I love most, and in that faith will perish,
As I have brought my life here to confirm it,
As I have serv'd her truest, worthiest,
As I dare kill this cousin that denies it,
So let me be most traitor, and ye please me.
For scorning thy edict, duke, ask that lady
Why she is fair, and why her eyes command me
Stay here to love her; and, if she say "traitor,"
I am a villain fit to lie unburied.
Pal. Thou shalt have pity of us both, O Theseus,

If unto neither thou show mercy; stop,
As thou art just, thy noble ear against us;
As thou art valiant, for thy cousin's soul,
Whose twelve strong labors crown his memory,
Let's die together, at one instant, duke;
Only a little let him fall before me,
That I may tell my soul he shall not have her.

Thes. I grant your wish; for, to say true, your cousin
Has ten times more offended, for I gave him
More mercy than you found, sir, your offenses
Being no more than his.— None here speak for 'em;
For, ere the sun set, both shall sleep for ever.

Hip. Alas, the pity!— Now or never, sister,
Speak, not to be denied: that face of yours
Will bear the curses else of after-ages
For these lost cousins.

Emi. In my face, dear sister,
I find no anger to 'em, nor no ruin;
The misadventure of their own eyes kill 'em:
Yet that I will be woman and have pity,
My knees shall grow to the ground but I'll get mercy.
Help me, dear sister: in a deed so virtuous
The powers of all women will be with us.—
Most royal brother,— [*They kneel.*

Hip. Sir, by our tie of marriage,—

Emi. By your own spotless honor,—

Hip. By that faith,
That fair hand, and that honest heart you gave me,—

Emi. By that you would have pity in another,
By your own virtues infinite,—

Hip. By valor,
By all the chaste nights I have ever pleas'd you,—

Thes. These are strange conjurings.

Pir. Nay, then, I'll in too:— [*Kneels.*
By all our friendship, sir, by all our dangers,
By all you love most, wars, and this sweet lady,—

Emi. By that you would have trembled to deny
A blushing maid,—

Hip. By your own eyes, by strength,
In which you swore I went beyond all women,
Almost all men, and yet I yielded, Theseus,—

Per. To crown all this, by your most noble soul,
Which cannot want due mercy, I beg first.
Hip. Next, hear my prayers.
Emi. Last, let me entreat, sir.
Pir. For mercy.
Hip. Mercy.
Emi. Mercy on these princes.
Thes. Ye make my faith reel: say I felt
Compassion to 'em both, how would you place it?
Emi. Upon their lives; but with their banishments.
Thes. You're a right woman, sister; you have pity,
But want the understanding where to use it.
If you desire their lives, invent a way
Safer than banishment: can these two live,
And have the agony of love about 'em,
And not kill one another? every day
They'd fight about you; hourly bring your honor
In public question with their swords. Be wise, then,
And here forget 'em; it concerns your credit
And my oath equally; I've said they die:
Better they fall by the law than one another.
Bow not my honor.
Emi. O my noble brother,
That oath was rashly made, and in your anger;
Your reason will not hold it: if such vows
Stand for express will, all the world must perish.
Beside, I have another oath 'gainst yours,
Of more authority, I'm sure more love;
Not made in passion neither, but good heed.
Thes. What is it, sister?
Pir. Urge it home, brave lady.
Emi. That you would ne'er deny me any thing
Fit for my modest suit and your free granting:
I tie you to your word now; if ye fail in't,
Think how you maim your honor,—
For now I'm set a-begging, sir, I'm deaf
To all but your compassion: how their lives
Might breed the ruin of my name's opinion!
Shall any thing that loves me perish for me?
That were a cruel wisdom: do men proin
The straight young boughs that blush with thousand blossoms,

Because they may be rotten? O Duke Theseus,
The goodly mothers that have groan'd for these,
And all the longing maids that ever lov'd them,
If your vow stand, shall curse me and my beauty,
And in their funeral songs for these two cousins
Despise my cruelty, and cry woe-worth me,
Till I am nothing but the scorn of women.
For heaven's sake save their lives, and banish 'em.

Thes. On what conditions?

Emi. Swear 'em never more
To make me their contention or to know me,
To tread upon thy dukedom, and to be,
Wherever they shall travel, ever strangers
To one another.

Pal. I'll be cut a-pieces
Before I take this oath: forget I love her?
O all ye gods, despise me, then. Thy banishment
I not mislike, so we may fairly carry
Our swords and cause along; else, never trifle,
But take our lives, duke: I must love, and will;
And for that love must and dare kill this cousin,
On any piece the earth has.

Thes. Will you, Arcite,
Take these conditions?

Pal. He's a villain, then.

Pir. These are men!

Arc. No, never, duke; 'tis worse to me than begging,
To take my life so basely. Though I think
I never shall enjoy her, yet I'll preserve
The honor of affection, and die for her,
Make death a devil.

Thes. What may be done? for now I feel compassion

Pir. Let it not fall again, sir.

Thes. Say, Emilia,
If one of them were dead, as one must, are you
Content to take the other to your husband?
They cannot both enjoy you: they are princes
As goodly as your own eyes, and as noble
As ever fame yet spoke of: look upon 'em,
And, if you can love, end this difference;
I give consent.— Are you content too, princes?

Pal. } With all our souls.
Arc. }
Thes. He that she refuses
Must die, then.
Pal. } Any death thou canst invent, duke.
Arc. }
Pal. If I fall from that mouth, I fall with favor,
And lovers yet unborn shall bless my ashes.
Arc. If she refuse me, yet my grave will wed me,
And soldiers sing my epitaph.
Thes. Make choice, then.
Emi. I cannot, sir; they're both too excellent:
For me, a hair shall never fall of these men.
Hip. What will become of 'em?
Thes. Thus I ordain it;
And, by mine honor, once again it stands,
Or both shall die.— You shall both to your country;
And each, within this month, accompanied
With three fair knights, appear again in this place,
In which I'll plant a pyramid; and whether,
Before us that are here, can force his cousin
By fair and knightly strength to touch the pillar,
He shall enjoy her; th' other lose his head,
And all his friends; nor shall he grudge to fall,
Nor think he dies with interest in this lady.
Will this content ye?
Pal. Yes.— Here, cousin Arcite,
I'm friends again till that hour.
Arc. I embrace ye.
Thes. Are you content, sister?
Emi. Yes; I must, sir;
Else both miscarry.
Thes. Come, shake hands again, then;
And take heed, as you're gentlemen, this quarrel
Sleep till the hour prefix'd, and hold your course.
Pal. We dare not fail thee, Theseus.
Thes. Come, I'll give ye
Now usage like to princes and to friends.
When ye return, who wins, I'll settle here;
Who loses, yet I'll weep upon his bier. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Athens. A room in the prison.*

Enter Gaoler *and* First Friend.

Gaoler. Hear you no more? was nothing said of me
Concerning the escape of Palamon?
Good sir, remember.
First Friend. Nothing that I heard;
For I came home before the business
Was fully ended: yet I might perceive,
Ere I departed, a great likelihood
Of both their pardons; for Hippolyta
And fair-ey'd Emily upon their knees
Begg'd with such handsome pity, that the duke
Methought stood staggering whether he should follow
His rash oath, or the sweet compassion
Of those two ladies; and to second them,
That truly noble prince Pirithous,
Half his own heart, set in too, that I hope
All shall be well: neither heard I one question
Of your name or his scape.
Gaoler. Pray heaven, it hold so!

Enter Second Friend.

Sec. Friend. Be of good comfort, man: I bring you news,
Good news.
Gaoler. They're welcome.
Sec. Friend. Palamon has clear'd you,
And got your pardon, and discover'd how
And by whose means he scap'd, which was your daughter's,
Whose pardon is procur'd too; and the prisoner —
Not to be held ungrateful to her goodness —
Has given a sum of money to her marriage,
A large one, I'll assure you.
Gaoler. Ye're a good man,
And ever bring good news.
First Friend. How was it ended?

Sec. Friend. Why, as it should be; they that never begg'd
But they prevail'd, had their suits fairly granted:
The prisoners have their lives.
First Friend. I knew 'twould be so.
Sec. Friend. But there be new conditions, which you'll hear of.
At better time.
Gaoler. I hope they're good.
Sec. Friend. They're honorable:
How good they'll prove, I know not
First Friend. 'Twill be known.

Enter Wooer.

Wooer. Alas, sir, where's your daughter?
Gaoler. Why do you ask?
Wooer. O, sir, when did you see her?
Sec. Friend. How he looks!
Gaoler. This morning.
Wooer. Was she well? was she in health, sir?
When did she sleep?
First Friend. These are strange questions.
Gaoler. I do not think she was very well; for, now
You make me mind her, but this very day
I ask'd her questions, and she answer'd me
So far from what she was, so childishly,
So sillily, as if she were a fool,
An innocent; and I was very angry.
But what of her, sir?
Wooer. Nothing but my pity:
But you must know it, and as good by me
As by another that less loves her.
Gaoler. Well, sir?
First Friend. Not right?
Sec. Friend. Not well?
Wooer. No, sir; not well:
'Tis too true, she is mad.
First Friend. It cannot be.
Wooer. Believe, you'll find it so.
Gaoler. I half suspected
What you have told me; the gods comfort her!
Either this was her love to Palamon,

Or fear of my miscarrying on his scape,
Or both.

Wooer. 'Tis likely.

Gaoler. But why all this haste, sir?

Wooer. I'll tell you quickly. As I late was angling
In the great lake that lies behind the palace,
From the far' shore, thick set with reeds and sedges,
As patiently I was attending sport,
I heard a voice, a shrill one; and attentive
I gave my ear; when I might well perceive
'Twas one that sung, and, by the smallness of it,
A boy or woman. I then left my angle
To his own skill, came near, but yet perceiv'd not
Who made the sound, the rushes and the reeds
Had so encompass'd it: I laid me down,
And listen'd to the words she sung; for then,
Through a small glade cut by the fishermen,
I saw it was your daughter.

Gaoler. Pray, go on, sir.

Wooer. She sung much, but no sense; only I heard her
Repeat this often, "Palamon is gone,
Is gone to the wood to gather mulberries;
I'll find him out to-morrow."

First Friend. Pretty soul!

Wooer. "His shackles will betray him, he'll be taken;
And what shall I do then? I'll bring a bevy,
A hundred black-ey'd maids that love as I do,
With chaplets on their heads of daffodillies,
With cherry lips, and cheeks of damask roses,
And all we'll dance an antic 'fore the duke,
And beg his pardon." Then she talk'd of you, sir;
That you must lose your head to-morrow morning,
And she must gather flowers to bury you,
And see the house made handsome. Then she sung
Nothing but "Willow, willow, willow;" and between
Ever was, "Palamon, fair Palamon,"
And "Palamon was a tall young man." The place
Was knee-deep where she sat; her careless tresses
A wreath of bulrush rounded; about her stuck
Thousand fresh water-flowers of several colors;
That methought she appear'd like the fair nymph

That feeds the lake with waters, or as Iris
Newly dropt down from heaven. Rings she made
Of rushes that grew by, and to 'em spoke
The prettiest posies,— "Thus our true love's tied,"
"This you may loose, not me," and many a one;
And then she wept, and sung again, and sigh'd,
And with the same breath smil'd, and kiss'd her hand.

Sec. Friend. Alas, what pity 'tis!

Wooer. I made in to her:
She saw me, and straight sought the flood; I sav'd her,
And set her safe to land: when presently
She slipt away, and to the city made,
With such a cry, and swiftness, that, believe me,
She left me far behind her. Three or four
I saw from far off cross her, one of 'em
I knew to be your brother; where she stay'd,
And fell, scarce to be got away: I left them with her,
And hither came to tell you. Here they are.

Enter Gaoler's Brother, Gaoler's Daughter, *and others.*

Daugh. [*sings*]

May you never more enjoy the light, &c.

Is not this a fine song?

Broth. O, a very fine one!

Daugh. I can sing twenty more.

Broth. I think you can.

Daugh. Yes, truly, can I; I can sing *The Broom*
And *Bonny Robin.* Are not you a tailor?

Broth. Yes.

Daugh. Where's my wedding gown?

Broth. I'll bring't to-morrow

Daugh. Do, very rearly; I must be abroad else,
To call the maids and pay the minstrels;
For I must lose my maidenhead by cock-light;
'Twill never thrive else.

O fair, O sweet, &c. [*Sings.*

Broth. You must even take it patiently.

Gaoler. 'Tis true.

Daugh. Good even, good men. Pray, did you ever hear
Of one young Palamon?

Gaoler. Yes, wench, we know him.
Daugh. Is't not a fine young gentleman?
Gaoler. 'Tis love!
Broth. By no means cross her; she is then distemper'd
Far worse than now she shows.
First Friend. Yes, he's a fine man.
Daugh. O, is he so? You have a sister?
First Friend. Yes.
Daugh. But she shall never have him, tell her so,
For a trick that I know: y' had best look to her,
For, if she see him once, she's gone; she's done,
And undone in an hour. All the young maids
Of our town are in love with him: but I laugh at 'em,
And let 'em all alone; is't not a wise course?
First Friend. Yes.
Daugh. There is at least two hundred now with child by him,—
There must be four; yet I keep close for all this,
Close as a cockle; and all these must be boys,—
He has the trick on't; and at ten years old
They must be all gelt for musicians,
And sing the wars of Theseus.
Sec. Friend. This is strange.
Daugh. As ever you heard: but say nothing.
First Friend. No.
Daugh. They come from all parts of the dukedom to him;
I'll warrant ye, he had not so few last night
As twenty to dispatch; he'll tickle't up
In two hours, if his hand be in.
Gaoler. She's lost,
Past all cure.
Broth. Heaven forbid, man!
Daugh. Come hither; you're a wise man.
First Friend. Does she know him?
Sec. Friend. No; would she did!
Daugh. You're master of a ship?
Gaoler. Yes.
Daugh. Where's your compass?
Gaoler. Here.
Daugh. Set it to the north;

And now direct your course to the wood, where Palamon
Lies longing for me; for the tackling
Let me alone: come, weigh, my hearts, cheerly!
All. Owgh, owgh, owgh! 'tis up, the wind is fair:
Top the bowling; out with the main-sail:
Where's your whistle, master?
Broth. Let's get her in.
Gaoler. Up to the top, boy!
Broth. Where's the pilot?
First Friend. Here.
Daugh. What kenn'st thou?
Sec. Friend. A fair wood.
Daugh. Bear for it, master;
Tack about!

When Cynthia with her borrow'd light, &c. [*Sings.*
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Athens. An apartment in the palace.*

Enter EMILIA *with two pictures.*

Emi. Yet I may bind those wounds up, that must open
And bleed to death for my sake else; I'll choose,
And end their strife: two such young handsome men
Shall never fall for me; their weeping mothers,
Following the dead-cold ashes of their sons,
Shall never curse my cruelty. Good heaven,
What a sweet face has Arcite! If wise Nature,
With all her best endowments, all those beauties
She sows into the births of noble bodies,
Were here a mortal woman, and had in her
The coy denials of young maids, yet doubtless
She would run mad for this man: what an eye,
Of what a fiery sparkle and quick sweetness,
Has this young prince! here Love himself sits smiling;
Just such another wanton Ganymede
Set Jove a-fire with, and enforc'd the god
Snatch up the goodly boy, and set him by him,
A shining constellation: what a brow,
Of what a spacious majesty, he carries,
Arch'd like the great-ey'd Juno's, but far sweeter,
Smoother than Pelops' shoulder! Fame and Honor,
Methinks, from hence, as from a promontory

Pointed in heaven, should clap their wings, and sing,
To all the under-world, the loves and fights
Of gods, and such men near 'em. Palamon
Is but his foil; to him, a mere dull shadow:
He's swarth and meager, of an eye as heavy
As if he had lost his mother; a still temper,
No stirring in him, no alacrity;
Of all this sprightly sharpness, not a smile;—
Yet these that we count errors may become him:
Narcissus was a sad boy, but a heavenly.
O, who can find the bent of woman's fancy?
I am a fool, my reason is lost in me;
I have no choice, and I have lied so lewdly
That women ought to beat me. On my knees
I ask pardon, Palamon; thou art alone,
And only beautiful; and these thy eyes,
These the bright lamps of beauty, that command
And threaten Love; and what young maid dare cross 'em?
What a bold gravity, and yet inviting,
Has this brown manly face! O Love, this only
From this hour is complexion. Lie there, Arcite;
Thou art a changeling to him, a mere gypsy,
And this the noble body. I am sotted,
Utterly lost; my virgin faith has fled me,
For, if my brother but even now had ask'd me
Whether I lov'd, I had run mad for Arcite;
Now if my sister, more for Palamon.—
Stand both together.—Now, come, ask me, brother;—
Alas, I know not!—Ask me now, sweet sister;—
I may go look!—What a mere child is fancy,
That, having two fair gauds of equal sweetness,
Cannot distinguish, but must cry for both!

Enter a Gentleman.

How now, sir!
Gent. From the noble duke your brother,
Madam, I bring you news: the knights are come.
Emi. To end the quarrel?
Gent. Yes.
Emi. Would I might end first!
What sins have I committed, chaste Diana,
That my unspotted youth must now be soil'd

With blood of princes, and my chastity
Be made the altar where the lives of lovers—
Two greater and two better never yet
Made mothers joy — must be the sacrifice
To my unhappy beauty?

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PIRITHOUS, *and* Attendants.

Thes. Bring 'em in
Quickly by any means; I long to see 'em.—
Your two contending lovers are return'd,
And with them their fair knights: now, my fair sister,
You must love one of them.
Emi. I had rather both,
So neither for my sake should fall untimely.
Thes. Who saw 'em?
Pir. I a while.
Gent. And I.

Enter Messenger.

Thes. From whence come you, sir?
Mess. From the knights.
Thes. Pray, speak,
You that have seen them, what they are.
Mess. I will, sir,
And truly what I think. Six braver spirits
Than those they've brought — if we judge by th' outside —
I never saw nor read of. He that stands
In the first place with Arcite, by his seeming
Should be a stout man, by his face a prince,—
His very looks so say him; his complexion
Nearer a brown than black; stern, and yet noble,
Which shows him hardy, fearless, proud of dangers;
The circles of his eyes show fire within him,
And as a heated lion so he looks;
His hair hangs long behind him, black and shining
Like ravens' wings; his shoulders broad and strong;
Arm'd long and round; and on his thigh a sword
Hung by a curious baldrick, when he frowns
To seal his will with; better, o' my conscience,
Was never soldier's friend.

Thes. Thou'st well describ'd him.
Pir. Yet a great deal short,
Methinks, of him that's first with Palamon.
Thes. Pray, speak him, friend.
Pir. I guess he is a prince too,
And, if it may be, greater; for his show
Has all the ornament of honor in't:
He's somewhat bigger than the knight he spoke of,
But of a face far sweeter; his complexion
Is, as a ripe grape, ruddy; he has felt,
Without doubt, what he fights for, and so apter
To make this cause his own; in's face appears
All the fair hopes of what he undertakes;
And when he's angry, then a settled valor,
Not tainted with extremes, runs through his body,
And guides his arm to brave things; fear he cannot,
He shows no such soft temper; his head's yellow,
Hard-hair'd, and curl'd, thick-twin'd, like ivy-tops,
Not to undo with thunder; in his face
The livery of the warlike maid appears,
Pure red and white, for yet no beard has blest him;
And in his rolling eyes sits Victory,
As if she ever meant to crown his valor;
His nose stands high, a character of honor,
His red lips, after fights, are fit for ladies.
Emi. Must these men die too?
Pir. When he speaks, his tongue
Sounds like a trumpet; all his lineaments
Are as a man would wish 'em, strong and clean;
He wears a well-steel'd ax, the staff of gold;
His age some five-and-twenty.
Mess. There's another,
A little man, but of a tough soul, seeming
As great as any; fairer promises
In such a body yet I never look'd on.
Pir. O, he that's freckle-fac'd?
Mess. The same, my lord:
Are they not sweet ones?
Pir. Yes, they're well.
Mess. Methinks,
Being so few and well-dispos'd, they show
Great and fine art in nature. He's white-hair'd,

Not wanton-white, but such a manly color
Next to an auburn; tough and nimble-set,
Which shows an active soul; his arms are brawny,
Lin'd with strong sinews; to the shoulder-piece
Gently they swell, like women new-conceiv'd,
Which speaks him prone to labor, never fainting
Under the weight of arms; stout-hearted, still,
But, when he stirs, a tiger; he's gray-ey'd,
Which yields compassion where he conquers; sharp
To spy advantages, and where he finds 'em,
He's swift to make 'em his; he does no wrongs,
Nor takes none; he's round-fac'd, and when he smiles
He shows a lover, when he frowns a soldier;
About his head he wears the winner's oak,
And in it stuck the favor of his lady;
His age some six-and-thirty; in his hand
He bears a charging-staff, emboss'd with silver.

Thes. Are they all thus?

Pir. They're all the sons of honor.

Thes. Now, as I have a soul, I long to see 'em.—
Lady; you shall see men fight now.

Hip. I wish it,
But not the cause, my lord: they would show
Bravely about the titles of two kingdoms:
'Tis pity Love should be so tyrannous.—
O my soft-hearted sister, what think you?
Weep not, till they weep blood, wench: it must be.

Thes. You've steel'd 'em with your beauty.— Honor'd friend,
To you I give the field; pray, order it
Fitting the persons that must use it.

Pir. Yes, sir.

Thes. Come, I'll go visit 'em: I cannot stay —
Their fame has fir'd me so — till they appear.
Good friend, be royal.

Pir. There shall want no bravery.

Emi. Poor wench, go weep; for whosoever wins
Loses a noble cousin for thy sins. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Athens. A room in the prison.*

Enter Gaoler, Wooer, *and* Doctor.

Doctor. Her distraction is more at some time of the moon than at other some, is it not?

Gaoler. She is continually in a harmless distemper; sleeps little; altogether without appetite, save often drinking; dreaming of another world and a better; and what broken piece of matter soe'er she's about, the name Palamon lards it; that she farces every business withal, fits it to every question.— Look, where she comes; you shall perceive her behavior.

Enter Gaoler's Daughter.

Daugh. I have forgot it quite; the burden on't was *Down-a, down-a;* and penned by no worse man than Geraldo, Emilia's schoolmaster: he's as fantastical, too, as ever he may go upon's legs; for in the next world will Dido see Palamon, and then will she be out of love with Æneas.

Doctor. What stuff's here! poor soul!

Gaoler. Even thus all day long.

Daugh. Now for this charm that I told you of. You must bring a piece of silver on the tip of your tongue, or no ferry: then, if it be your chance to come where the blessed spirits are — there's a sight now! — we maids that have our livers perished, cracked to pieces with love, we shall come there, and do nothing all day long but pick flowers with Proserpine; then will I make Palamon a nosegay; then let him — mark me — then --

Doctor. How prettily she's amiss! note her a little further.

Daughter. Faith, I'll tell you; sometimes we go to barley-break, we of the blessed. Alas, 'tis a sore life they have i' th' other place, such burning, frying, boiling, hissing, howling, chattering, cursing! O, they have shrewd measure! Take heed: if one be mad, or hang, or drown themselves, thither they go; Jupiter bless us! and there shall we be put in a caldron of lead and usurers' grease, amongst a whole million of cut-purses, and there boil like a gammon of bacon that will never be enough.

Doctor. How her brain coins!

Daugh. Lords and courtiers that have got maids with child, they are in this place; they shall stand in fire up to the navel, and in ice up to the heart, and there th' offending part burns, and the deceiving part freezes; in troth, a very grievous punishment, as one would think, for such a trifle: believe me, one would marry a leprous witch to be rid on't, I'll assure you.

Doctor. How she continues this fancy! 'Tis not an engraffed madness, but a most thick and profound melancholy.

Daugh. To hear there a proud lady and a proud city-wife howl together! I were a beast, an I'd call it good sport: one cries, "O, this smoke!" th' other, "This fire!" one cries, "O, that ever I did it behind the arras!" and then howls; th' other curses a suing fellow and her garden-house. [*Sings.*

I will be true, my stars, my fate, &c. [*Exit.*

Gaoler. What think you of her, sir?

Doctor. I think she has a perturbed mind which I cannot minister to.

Gaoler. Alas, what then?

Doctor. Understand you she ever affected any man ere she beheld Palamon?

Gaoler. I was once, sir, in great hope she had fixed her liking on this gentleman, my friend.

Wooer. I did think so too; and would account I had a great pen'worth on't, to give half my state, that both she and I at this present stood unfeignedly on the same terms.

Doctor. That intemperate surfeit of her eye hath distempered the other senses: they may return and settle again to execute their preordained faculties; but they are now in a most extravagant vagary. This you must do: confine her to a place where the light may rather seem to steal in than be permitted. Take upon you, young sir, her friend, the name of Palamon; say you come to eat with her, and to commune of love; this will catch her attention, for this her mind beats upon; other objects, that are inserted 'tween her mind and eye, become the pranks and friskings of her madness: sing to her such green songs of love as she says Palamon hath sung in prison;

come to her, stuck in as sweet flowers as the season is mistress of, and thereto make an addition of some other compounded odors, which are grateful to the sense; all this shall become Palamon, for Palamon can sing, and Palamon is sweet, and every good thing: desire to eat with her, carve her, drink to her, and still among intermingle your petition of grace and acceptance into her favor: learn what maids have been her companions and play-feres; and let them repair to her with Palamon in their mouths, and appear with tokens, as if they suggested for him. It is a falsehood she is in, which is with falsehoods to be combated. This may bring her to eat, to sleep, and reduce what's now out of square in her into their former law and regiment: I have seen it approved, how many times I know not; but to make the number more I have great hope in this. I will, between the passages of this project, come in with my appliance. Let us put it in execution; and hasten the success, which, doubt not, will bring forth comfort. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Athens. A court before the temples of Mars, Venus, and Diana.*

A flourish. Enter THESEUS, PIRITHOUS, HIPPOLYTA, *and* Attendants.

Thes. Now let 'em enter, and before the gods
Tender their holy prayers: let the temples
Burn bright with sacred fires, and the altars
In hallow'd clouds commend their swelling incense
To those above us; let no due be wanting:
They have a noble work in hand, will honor
The very powers that love 'em.
Pir. Sir, they enter.

A flourish of cornets. Enter PALAMON, ARCITE, *and their* Knights.

Thes. You valiant and strong-hearted enemies,
You royal germane foes, that this day come
To blow that nearness out that flames between ye,
Lay by your anger for an hour, and dove-like

Before the holy altars of your helpers,
The all-fear'd gods, bow down your stubborn bodies:
Your ire is more than mortal; so your help be!
And, as the gods regard ye, fight with justice:
I'll leave you to your prayers, and betwixt ye
I part my wishes.
Pir. Honor crown the worthiest!
[*Exeunt all except Palamon, Arcite, and their knights.*
Pal. The glass is running now that cannot finish
Till one of us expire: think you but thus,
That, were there aught in me which strove to show
Mine enemy in this business, were't one eye
Against another, arm oppress'd by arm,
I would destroy th' offender; coz, I would,
Though parcel of myself: then from this gather
How I should tender you.
Arc. I am in labor
To push your name, your ancient love, our kindred,
Out of my memory; and i' the self-same place
To seat something I would confound: so hoist we
The sails, that must these vessels port even where
The heavenly limiter pleases.
Pal. You speak well.
Before I turn, let me embrace thee, cousin:
This I shall never do again.
Arc. One farewell!
Pal. Why, let it be so: farewell, coz!
Arc. Farewell, sir!
[*They embrace.— Exeunt Palamon and his Knights.*
Knights, kinsmen, lovers, yea, my sacrifices,
True worshipers of Mars, whose spirit in you
Expels the seeds of fear, and th' apprehension
Which still is father of it, go with me
Before the god of our profession: there
Require of him the hearts of lions, and
The breath of tigers, yea, the fierceness too,
Yea, the speed also,— to go on, I mean,
Else wish we to be snails: you know my prize
Must be dragg'd out of blood; force and great feat
Must put my garland on, where she sticks
The queen of flowers; our intercession, then,
Must be to him that makes the camp a cestron

Brimm'd with the blood of men: give me your aid,
And bend your spirits towards him.

[*They advance to the altar of Mars, and fall on their faces; then kneel.*

Thou mighty one, that with thy power hast turn'd
Green Neptune into purple; whose approach
Comets prewarn: whose havoc in vast field
Unearthèd skulls proclaim; whose breath blows down
The teeming Ceres' foison; who dost pluck
With hand armipotent from forth blue clouds
The mason'd turrets; that both mak'st and break'st
The stony girths of cities; me thy pupil,
Young'st follower of thy drum, instruct this day
With military skill, that to thy laud
I may advance my streamer, and by thee
Be styl'd the lord o' the day; — give me, great Mars,
Some token of thy pleasure.

[*Here they fall on their faces as before, and there is heard clanging of armor, with a short thunder, as the burst of a battle, whereupon they all rise and bow to the altar.*

O great corrector of enormous times,
Shaker of o'er-rank states, thou grand decider
Of dusty and old titles, that heal'st with blood
The earth when it is sick, and cur'st the world
O' the plurisy of people; I do take
Thy signs auspiciously, and in thy name
To my design march boldly.— Let us go. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter PALAMON *and his* Knights.

Pal. Our stars must glister with new fire, or be
To-day extinct; our argument is love,
Which if the goddess of it grant, she gives
Victory too: then blend your spirits with mine,
You, whose free nobleness do make my cause
Your personal hazard: to the goddess Venus
Commend we our proceeding, and implore
Her power unto our party.

[*They advance to the altar of Venus, and fall on their faces; then kneel.*

Hail, sovereign queen of secrets, who hast power
To call the fiercest tyrant from his rage,

To weep unto a girl; that hast the might
Even with an eye-glance to choke Mars's drum
And turn th' alarm to whispers; that canst make
A cripple flourish with his crutch, and cure him
Before Apollo: that mayst force the king
To be his subject's vassal, and induce
Stale gravity to dance; the pollèd bachelor —
Whose youth, like wanton boys through bonfires,
Have skipt thy flame — at seventy thou canst catch,
And make him, to the scorn of his hoarse throat,
Abuse young lays of love: what godlike power
Hast thou not power upon? to Phœbus thou
Add'st flames, hotter than his; the heavenly fires
Did scorch his mortal son, thine him: the huntress
All moist and cold, some say, began to throw
Her bow away, and sigh: take to thy grace
Me, thy vow'd soldier, who do bear thy yoke
As 'twere a wreath of roses, yet is heavier
Than lead itself, stings more than nettles: I
Have never been foul-mouth'd against thy law;
Ne'er reveal'd secret, for I knew none,— would not,
Had I kenn'd all that were; I never practic'd
Upon man's wife, nor would the libels read
Of liberal wits; I never at great feasts
Sought to betray a beauty, but have blush'd
At simpering sirs that did; I have been harsh
To large confessors, and have hotly ask'd them
If they had mothers? I had one, a woman,
And women 'twere they wrong'd: I knew a man
Of eighty winters,— this I told them,— who
A lass of fourteen brided; 'twas thy power
To put life into dust; the agèd cramp
Had screw'd his square foot round,
The gout had knit his fingers into knots,
Torturing convulsions from his globy eyes
Had almost drawn their spheres, that what was life
In him seem'd torture; this anatomy
Had by his young fair fere a boy, and I
Believ'd it was his, for she swore it was,
And who would not believe her? Brief, I am
To those that prate, and have done, no companion;
To those that boast, and have not, a defier;

To those that would, and cannot, a rejoicer:
Yea, him I do not love, that tells close offices
The foulest way, nor names concealments in
The boldest language; such a one I am,
And vow that lover never yet made sigh
Truer than I. O, then, most soft-sweet goddess,
Give me the victory of this question, which
Is true love's merit, and bless me with a sign
Of thy great pleasure.

[*Here music is heard, and doves are seen to flutter: they fall again upon their faces, then on their knees.*

O thou that from eleven to ninety reign'st
In mortal bosoms, whose chase is this world,
And we in herds thy game, I give thee thanks
For this fair token; which being laid unto
Mine innocent-true heart, arms in assurance
My body to this business.— Let us rise,
And bow before the goddess: time comes on.

[*They bow, and then exeunt.*

Still music of records. Enter EMILIA *in white, her hair about her shoulders, and wearing a wheaten wreath; one in white holding up her train, her hair stuck with flowers; one before her carrying a silver hind, in which is conveyed incense and sweet odors, which being set upon the altar of Diana, her Maids standing aloof, she sets fire to it; then they courtesy and kneel.*

Emi. O sacred, shadowy, cold, and constant queen,
Abandoner of revels, mute, contemplative,
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure
As wind-fann'd snow, who to thy female knights
Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,
Which is their order's robe; I here, thy priest,
Am humbled 'fore thine altar: O, vouchsafe,
With that thy rare green eye — which never yet
Beheld thing maculate — look on thy virgin;
And, sacred silver mistress, lend thine ear —
Which ne'er heard scurril term, into whose port
Ne'er enter'd wanton sound — to my petition,
Season'd with holy fear. This is my last

Of vestal office; I'm bride-habited,
But maiden-hearted: a husband I have 'pointed,
But do not know him; out of two I should
Choose one, and pray for his success; but I
Am guiltless of election: of mine eyes
Were I to lose one,— they are equal precious,—
I could doom neither; that which perish'd should
Go to't unsentenc'd: therefore, most modest queen,
He, of the two pretenders, that best loves me
And has the truest title in't, let him
Take off my wheaten garland, or else grant
The file and quality I hold I may
Continue in thy band.

[*Here the hind vanishes under the altar, and in the place ascends a rose-tree, having one rose upon it.*

See what our general of ebbs and flows
Out from the bowels of her holy altar
With sacred act advances; but one rose!
If well inspir'd, this battle shall confound
Both these brave knights, and I, a virgin flower,
Must grow alone, unpluck'd.

[*Here is heard a sudden twang of instruments, and the rose falls from the tree, which vanishes under the altar.*

The flower is fall'n, the tree descends.— O mistress,
Thou here dischargest me; I shall be gather'd,
I think so; but I know not thine own will:
Unclasp thy mystery.— I hope she's pleas'd;
Her signs were gracious. [*They courtesy, and then exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Athens. A room in the prison.*

Enter Doctor, Gaoler, *and* Wooer *in the habit of* PALAMON.

Doctor. Has this advice I told you done any good upon her?

Wooer. O, very much; the maids that kept her company
Have half persuaded her that I am Palamon;
Within this half-hour she came smiling to me,
And ask'd me what I'd eat, and when I'd kiss her:
I told her presently, and kiss'd her twice.

Doctor. 'Twas well done: twenty times had been far
For there the cure lies mainly. [better;
Wooer. Then she told me
She'd watch with me to-night, for well she knew
What hour my fit would take me.
Doctor. Let her do so;
And, when your fit comes, fit her home and presently.
Wooer. She would have me sing.
Doctor. You did so?
Wooer. No.
Doctor. 'Twas very ill done, then;
You should observe her every way.
Wooer. Alas,
I have no voice, sir, to confirm her that way!
Doctor. That's all one, if ye make a noise:
If she entreat again, do any thing;
Lie with her, if she ask you.
Gaoler. Ho, there, doctor!
Doctor. Yes, in the way of cure.
Gaoler. But first, by your leave,
I' the way of honesty.
Doctor. That's but a niceness;
Ne'er cast your child away for honesty:
Cure her first this way; then, if she'll be honest,
She has the path before her.
Gaoler. Thank ye, doctor.
Doctor. Pray, bring her in,
And let's see how she is.
Gaoler. I will, and tell her
Her Palamon stays for her: but, doctor,
Methinks you are i' the wrong still. [*Exit.*
Doctor. Go, go;
You fathers are fine fools: her honesty!
And we should give her physic till we find that —
Wooer. Why, do you think she is not honest, sir?
Doctor. How old is she?
Wooer. She's eighteen.
Doctor. She may be;
But that's all one, 'tis nothing to our purpose:
Whate'er her father says, if you perceive
Her mood inclining that way that I spoke of
Videlicet, the way of flesh — you have me?

Wooer. Yes, very well, sir.
Doctor. Please her appetite,
And do it home; it cures her, *ipso facto*,
The melancholy humor that infects her.
Wooer. I am of your mind, doctor.
Doctor. You'll find it so. She comes: pray, humor her.

Re-enter Gaoler, *with his* Daughter *and* Maid.

Gaoler. Come; your love Palamon stays for you, child,
And has done this long hour, to visit you.
Daugh. I thank him for his gentle patience;
He's a kind gentleman, and I'm much bound to him.
Did you ne'er see the horse he gave me?
Gaoler. Yes.
Daugh. How do you like him?
Gaoler. He's a very fair one.
Daugh. You never saw him dance?
Gaoler. No.
Daugh. I have often:
He dances very finely, very comely;
And, for a jig, come cut and long tail to him;
He turns ye like a top.
Gaoler. That's fine indeed.
Daugh. He'll dance the morris twenty mile an hour,
And that will founder the best hobby-horse,
If I have any skill, in all the parish;
And gallops to the tune of *Light o' Love:*
What think you of this horse?
Gaoler. Having these virtues,
I think he might be brought to play at tennis.
Daugh. Alas, that's nothing.
Gaoler. Can he write and read too?
Daugh. A very fair hand; and cast himself th' accounts
Of all his hay and provender; that hostler
Must rise betime that cozens him. You know
The chestnut mare the duke has?
Gaoler. Very well.
Daugh. She's horribly in love with him, poor beast;
But he is like his master, coy and scornful.
Gaoler. What dowry has she?
Daugh. Some two hundred bottles,
And twenty strike of oats; but he'll ne'er have her:

He lisps in's neighing, able to entice
A miller's mare; he'll be the death of her.
Doctor. What stuff she utters!
Gaoler. Make court'sy; here your love comes.
Wooer. Pretty soul,
How do ye? That's a fine maid; there's a court'sy!
Daugh. Yours to command, i' the way of honesty.
How far is't now to th' end o' the world, my masters?
Doctor. Why, a day's journey, wench.
Daugh. Will you go with me?
Wooer. What shall we do there, wench?
Daugh. Why, play at stool-ball:
What is there else to do?
Wooer. I am content,
If we shall keep our wedding there.
Daugh. 'Tis true:
For there, I will assure you, we shall find
Some blind priest for the purpose, that will venture
To marry us, for here they're nice and foolish;
Besides, my father must be hang'd to-morrow,
And that would be a blot i' the business.
Are not you Palamon?
Wooer. Do not you know me?
Daugh. Yes; but you care not for me: I have nothing
But this poor petticoat and two coarse smocks.
Wooer. That's all one; I will have you.
Daugh. Will you surely?
Wooer. Yes, by this fair hand, will I.
Daugh. We'll to bed, then.
Wooer. Even when you will. [*Kisses her.*
Daugh. O, sir, you'd fain be nibbling.
Wooer. Why do you rub my kiss off?
Daugh. 'Tis a sweet one,
And will perfume me finely 'gainst the wedding.
Is not this your cousin Arcite?
Doctor. Yes, sweetheart;
And I am glad my cousin Palamon
Has made so fair a choice.
Daugh. Do you think he'll have me?
Doctor. Yes, without doubt.
Daugh. Do you think so too?
Gaoler. Yes.

Daugh. We shall have many children.— Lord, how ye're grown!
My Palamon I hope will grow, too, finely,
Now he's at liberty: alas, poor chicken,
He was kept down with hard meat and ill lodging;
But I'll kiss him up again.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. What do you here? you'll lose the noblest sight
That e'er was seen.
Gaoler. Are they i' the field?
Mess. They are:
You bear a charge there too.
Gaoler. I'll away straight.—
I must even leave you here.
Doctor. Nay, we'll go with you;
I will not lose the sight.
Gaoler. How did you like her?
Doctor. I'll warrant you, within these three or four days
I'll make her right again.— You must not from her,
But still preserve her in this way.
Wooer. I will.
Doctor. Let's get her in.
Wooer. Come, sweet, we'll go to dinner;
And then we'll play at cards.
Daugh. And shall we kiss too?
Wooer. A hundred times.
Daugh. And twenty?
Wooer. Ay, and twenty.
Daugh. Then we'll sleep together?
Doctor. Take her offer.
Wooer. Yes, marry, will we.
Daugh. But you shall not hurt me.
Wooer. I will not, sweet.
Daugh. If you do, love, I'll cry.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A part of the forest near Athens, and near the place appointed for the combat.*

Flourish. Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EMILIA, PIRITHOUS, *and* Attendants.

Emi. I'll no step further.
Pir. Will you lose this sight?
Emi. I had rather see a wren hawk at a fly,
Than this decision: every blow that falls
Threats a brave life; each stroke laments
The place whereon it falls, and sounds more like
A bell than blade: I will stay here:
It is enough, my hearing shall be punish'd
With what shall happen,—'gainst the which there is
No deafing,—but to hear, not taint mine eye
With dread sights it may shun.
Pir. Sir, my good lord,
Your sister will no further.
Thes. O, she must:
She shall see deeds of honor in their kind,
Which sometime show well, pencil'd: nature now
Shall make and act the story, the belief
Both seal'd with eye and ear. You must be present;
You are the victor's meed, the price and garland
To crown the questant's title.
Emi. Pardon me;
If I were there, I'd wink.
Thes. You must be there;
This trial is as 'twere i' the night, and you
The only star to shine.
Emi. I am extinct:
There is but envy in that light, which shows
The one the other. Darkness, which ever was
The dam of Horror, who does stand accurs'd
Of many mortal millions, may even now,
By casting her black mantle over both,
That neither could find other, get herself
Some part of a good name, and many a murder
Set off whereto she's guilty.
Hip. You must go.
Emi. In faith, I will not.
Thes. Why, the knights must kindle

Their valor at your eye: know, of this war
You are the treasure, and must needs be by
To give the service pay.

Emi. Sir, pardon me;
The title of a kingdom may be tried
Out of itself.

Thes. Well, well, then, at your pleasure:
Those that remain with you could wish their office
To any of their enemies.

Hip. Farewell, sister:
I'm like to know your husband 'fore yourself,
By some small start of time: he whom the gods
Do of the two know best, I pray them he
Be made your lot.

[*Exeunt all except Emilia and some of the Attendants.*

Emi. Arcite is gently visag'd; yet his eye
Is like an engine bent, or a sharp weapon
In a soft sheath; mercy and manly courage
Are bedfellows in his visage. Palamon
Has a most menacing aspect; his brow
Is grav'd, and seems to bury what it frowns on;
Yet sometimes 'tis not so, but alters to
The quality of his thoughts; long time his eye
Will dwell upon his object; melancholy
Becomes him nobly; so does Arcite's mirth;
But Palamon's sadness is a kind of mirth,
So mingled as if mirth did make him sad,
And sadness merry; those darker humors that
Stick misbecomingly on others, on him
Live in fair dwelling.

[*Cornets; and trumpets sound as to a charge, within.*

Hark, how yon spurs to spirit do incite
The princes to their proof! Arcite may win me;
And yet may Palamon wound Arcite to
The spoiling of his figure. O, what pity
Enough for such a chance! If I were by,
I might do hurt; for they would glance their eyes
Toward my seat, and in that motion might
Omit a ward, or forfeit an offense,
Which crav'd that very time: it is much better

I am not there; O, better never born
Than minister to such harm.
[*Cornets; and a great cry of* "A Palamon!" *within.*
What is the chance?
First Serv. The cry's "A Palamon!"
Emi. Then he has won. 'Twas ever likely:
He look'd all grace and success, and he is
Doubtless the prim'st of men. I prithee, run
And tell me how it goes.
[*Shout; cornets; and cry of* "A Palamon!" *within.*
First Serv. Still "Palamon!"
Emi. Run and inquire. [*Exit First Servant.*
Poor servant, thou hast lost:
Upon my right side still I wore thy picture,
Palamon's on the left: why so, I know not;
I had no end in't else; chance would have it so:
On the sinister side the heart lies; Palamon
Had the best-boding chance.
[*Another cry, and shout, and cornets, within.*
This burst of clamor
Is, sure, the end o' the combat.

Re-enter First Servant.

First Serv. They said that Palamon had Arcite's body
Within an inch o' the pyramid, that the cry
Was general "A Palamon!" but anon
Th' assistants made a brave redemption, and
The two bold tilters at this instant are
Hand to hand at it.
Emi. Were they metamorphos'd
Both into one — O, why? there were no woman
Worth so compos'd a man: their single share,
Their nobleness peculiar to them, gives
The prejudice of disparity, value's shortness,
To any lady breathing.
[*Cornets; and cry of* "Arcite, Arcite!" *within.*
More exulting?
"Palamon" still?
First Serv. Nay, now the sound is "Arcite."
Emi. I prithee, lay attention to the cry;
Set both thine ears to the business.

[*Cornets; and a great shout, and cry of* "Arcite, victory!" *within.*

First Serv. The cry is
"Arcite, and victory!" Hark: "Arcite, victory!"
The combat's consummation is proclaim'd
By the wind-instruments.

Emi. Half-sights saw
That Arcite was no babe: God's lid, his richness
And costliness of spirit look'd through him; it could
No more be hid in him than fire in flax,
Than humble banks can go to law with waters
That drift-winds force to raging. I did think
Good Palamon would miscarry; yet I knew not
Why I did think so: our reasons are not prophets,
When oft our fancies are. They're coming off:
Alas, poor Palamon! [*Cornets within.*

Re-enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PIRITHOUS, *with* ARCITE *as victor*, Attendants, *&c.*

Thes. Lo, where our sister is in expectation,
Yet quaking and unsettled.— Fairest Emily,
The gods, by their divine arbitrement,
Have given you this knight: he is a good one
As ever struck at head. Give me your hands:
Receive you her, you him; be plighted with
A love that grows as you decay.

Arc. Emily,
To buy you I have lost what's dearest to me,
Save what is bought; and yet I purchase cheaply,
As I do rate your value.

Thes. O lov'd sister,
He speaks now of as brave a knight as e'er
Did spur a noble steed: surely, the gods
Would have him die a bachelor, lest his race
Should show i' the world too godlike: his behavior
So charm'd me, that methought Alcides was
To him a sow of lead: if I could praise
Each part of him to th' all I've spoke, your Arcite
Did not lose by't; for he that was thus good
Encounter'd yet his better. I have heard
Two emulous Philomels beat the ear o' the night
With their contentious throats, now one the higher,

Anon the other, then again the first,
And by and by out-breasted, that the sense
Could not be judge between 'em : so it far'd
Good space between these kinsmen ; till heavens did
Make hardly one the winner.— Wear the garland
With joy that you have won.— For the subdu'd,
Give them our present justice, since I know
Their lives but pinch 'em : let it here be done.
The scene's not for our seeing : go we hence,
Right joyful, with some sorrow.— Arm your prize ;
I know you will not lose her.— Hippolyta,
I see one eye of yours conceives a tear,
The which it will deliver.

Emi. Is this winning?
O all you heavenly powers, where is your mercy?
But that your wills have said it must be so,
And charge me live to comfort this unfriended,
This miserable prince, that cuts away
A life more worthy from him than all women,
I should and would die too.

Hip. Infinite pity,
That four such eyes should be so fix'd on one,
That two must needs be blind for't!

Thes. So it is. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same part of the forest as in Act III. Scene VI.*

Enter PALAMON *and his* Knights *pinioned*, Gaoler, Executioner, &c., *and* Guard.

Pal. There's many a man alive that hath outliv'd
The love o' the people ; yea, i' the self-same state
Stands many a father with his child : some comfort
We have by so considering ; we expire,
And not without men's pity ; to live still
Have their good wishes ; we prevent
The loathsome misery of age, beguile
The gout and rheum, that in lag hours attend
For gray approachers ; we come towards the gods,
Young and unwapper'd, not halting under crimes
Many and stale ; that, sure, shall please the gods
Sooner than such, to give us nectar with 'em.

For we are more clear spirits. My dear kinsmen,
Whose lives for this poor comfort are laid down,
You've sold 'em too-too cheap.
First Knight. What ending could be
Of more content? O'er us the victors have
Fortune, whose title is as momentary
As to us death is certain; a grain of honor
They not o'er-weigh us.
Sec. Knight. Let us bid farewell;
And with our patience anger tottering Fortune,
Who, at her certain'st, reels.
Third Knight. Come; who begins?
Pal. Even he that led you to this banquet shall
Taste to you all.— Ah, ha, my friend, my friend!
Your gentle daughter gave me freedom once;
You'll see't done now for ever: pray, how does she?
I heard she was not well; her kind of ill
Gave me some sorrow.
Gaoler. Sir, she's well restor'd,
And to be married shortly.
Pal. By my short life,
I am most glad on't; 'tis the latest thing
I shall be glad of; prithee, tell her so;
Commend me to her, and, to piece her portion,
Tender her this. [*Gives purse.*
First Knight. Nay, let's be offerers all.
Sec. Knight. Is it a maid?
Pal. Verily, I think so;
A right good creature, more to me deserving
That I can quit or speak of.
All the Knights. Commend us to her.
[*Giving their purses.*
Gaoler. The gods requite you all, and make her thankful!
Pal. Adieu; and let my life be now as short
As my leave-taking.
First Knight. Lead, courageous cousin.
All the Knights. We'll follow cheerfully.
[*Palamon lays his head on the block. A great noise, and cry of* "Run, save, hold!" *within.*

Enter Messenger *in haste.*

Mess. Hold, hold! O, hold, hold, hold!

Enter PIRITHOUS *in haste.*

Pir. Hold, ho! it is a cursèd haste you made,
If you have done so quickly.— Noble Palamon,
The gods will show their glory in a life
That thou art yet to lead.
Pal. Can that be, when
Venus I've said is false? How do things fare?
Pir. Arise, great sir, and give the tidings ear
[*Palamon rises.*
That are most dearly sweet and bitter.
Pal. What
Hath wak'd us from our dream?
Pir. List, then. Your cousin,
Mounted upon a steed that Emily
Did first bestow on him,— a black one, owing
Not a hair-worth of white, which some will say
Weakens his price, and many will not buy
His goodness with this note; which superstition
Here finds allowance,— on this horse is Arcite
Trotting the stones of Athens, which the calkins
Did rather tell than trample; for the horse
Would make his length a mile, if't pleas'd his rider
To put pride in him: as he thus went counting
The flinty pavement, dancing as 'twere to the music
His own hoofs made,— for, as they say, from iron
Came music's origin,— what envious flint,
Cold as old Saturn, and like him possess'd
With fire malevolent, darted a spark,
Or what fierce sulphur else, to this end made,
I comment not; the hot horse, hot as fire,
Took toy at this, and fell to what disorder
His power could give his will, bounds, comes on end,
Forgets school-doing, being therein train'd,
And of kind manage; pig-like he whines
At the sharp rowel, which he frets at rather
Than any jot obeys; seeks all foul means
Of boisterous and rough jadery, to disseat
His lord that kept it bravely: when naught serv'd,
When neither curb would crack, girth break, nor differing plunges
Disroot his rider whence he grew, but that

He kept him 'tween his legs, on his hind hoofs
On end he stands,
That Arcite's legs, being higher than his head,
Seem'd with strange art to hang: his victor's wreath
Even then fell off his head; and presently
Backward the jade comes o'er, and his full poise
Becomes the rider's load. Yet is he living;
But such a vessel 'tis that floats but for
The surge that next approaches: he much desires
To have some speech with you. Lo, he appears.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EMILIA, *and* ARCITE *carried in a chair.*

Pal. O miserable end of our alliance!
The gods are mighty.— Arcite, if thy heart,
Thy worthy, manly heart, be yet unbroken,
Give me thy last words; I am Palamon,
One that yet loves thee dying.
Arc. Take Emilia,
And with her all the world's joy. Reach thy hand:
Farewell; I've told my last hour. I was false,
Yet never treacherous: forgive me, cousin.—
One kiss from fair Emilia. [*Kisses her.*]— 'Tis done:
Take her. I die. [*Dies.*
Pal. Thy brave soul seek Elysium!
Emi. I'll close thine eyes, prince; blessèd souls be with thee!
Thou art a right good man; and, while I live,
This day I give to tears.
Pal. And I to honor.
Thes. In this place first you fought; even very here
I sunder'd you: acknowledge to the gods
Your thanks that you are living.
His part is play'd, and, though it were too short,
He did it well; your day is lengthen'd, and
The blissful dew of heaven does arrose you:
The powerful Venus well hath grac'd her altar,
And given you your love; our master Mars
Hath vouch'd his oracle, and to Arcite gave
The grace of the contention: so the deities
Have show'd due justice.— Bear this hence.
Pal. O cousin,

That we should things desire, which do cost us
The loss of our desire! that naught could buy
Dear love but loss of dear love!

Thes. Never fortune
Did play a subtler game: the conquer'd triumphs,
The victor has the loss; yet in the passage
The gods have been most equal. Palamon,
Your kinsman hath confess'd the right o' the lady
Did lie in you; for you first saw her, and
Even then proclaim'd your fancy; he restor'd her,
As your stol'n jewel, and desir'd your spirit
To send him hence forgiven: the gods my justice
Take from my hand, and they themselves become
The executioners. Lead your lady off;
And call your lovers from the stage of death,
Whom I adopt my friends. A day or two
Let us look sadly, and give grace unto
The funeral of Arcite; in whose end
The visages of bridegrooms we'll put on,
And smile with Palamon; for whom an hour,
But one hour since, I was as dearly sorry
As glad of Arcite, and am now as glad
As for him sorry,— O you heavenly charmers,
What things you make of us! For what we lack
We laugh, for what we have are sorry; still
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful
For that which is, and with you leave dispute
That are above our question.— Let's go off,
And bear us like the time. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

I would now ask ye how ye like the play;
But, as it is with schoolboys, cannot say
I'm cruel-fearful. Pray, yet stay a while,
And let me look upon ye. No man smile?
Then it goes hard, I see. He that has
Lov'd a young handsome wench, then, show his face,—
'Tis strange if none be here,— and, if he will
Against his conscience, let him hiss, and kill
Our market. 'Tis in vain, I see, to stay ye:
Have at the worst can come, then! Now what say ye?

And yet mistake me not ; I am not bold ;
We have no such cause. If the tale we've told —
For 'tis no other — any way content ye,—
For to that honest purpose it was meant ye,—
We have our end ; and ye shall have ere long,
I dare say, many a better, to prolong
Your old loves to us. We and all our might
Rest at your service : gentlemen, good night.

[*Flourish.*

EDWARD THE THIRD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EDWARD THE THIRD, King of England.
EDWARD, Prince of Wales, his Son.
EARL OF WARWICK.
EARL OF DERBY.
EARL OF SALISBURY.
LORD AUDLEY.
LORD PERCY.
LODOWICK, Edward's Confidant.
SIR WILLIAM MOUNTAGUE.
SIR JOHN COPLAND.
Two Esquires, and a Herald, English.
ROBERT, styling himself Earl, of Artois.
EARL OF MONTFORT.
GOBIN DE GRAY.
JOHN, King of France.

CHARLES, PHILIP, } His Sons.
DUKE OF LORRAIN.
VILLIERS, a French Lord.
King of Bohemia, A Polish Captain, } Aids to King John.
Two Citizens of Calais.
A Captain, and a poor Inhabitant, of the same.
Another Captain; a Mariner.
Three Heralds, and four other Frenchmen.
DAVID, King of Scotland.
EARL DOUGLAS.
Two Messengers, Scotch.

PHILIPPA, Edward's Queen.
COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.
A French Woman.

Lords, and divers other Attendants; Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, etc.

SCENE—*Dispersed; in England, Flanders, and France.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.— *London. A Room of State in the Palace.*

Flourish. Enter King EDWARD, *attended;* PRINCE OF WALES, WARWICK, DERBY, AUDLEY, ARTOIS, *and others.*

Edward. Robert of Artois, banish'd though thou be
From France, thy native country, yet with us

Thou shalt retain as great a signiory;
For we create thee Earl of Richmond here.
And now go forwards with our pedigree;
Who next succeeded Philip Le Beau?
Art. Three sons of his; which all, successively,
Did sit upon their father's regal throne;
Yet died, and left no issue of their loins.
Edw. But was my mother sister unto those?
Art. She was, my lord; and only Isabelle,
Was all the daughters that this Philip had:
Whom afterward your father took to wife;
And, from the fragrant garden of her womb,
Your gracious self, the flower of Europe's hope,
Derivèd is inheritor to France.
But note the rancor of rebellious minds.
When thus the lineage of Le Beau was out,
The French obscur'd your mother's privilege;
And, though she were the next of blood, proclaim'd
John, of the house of Valois, now their king:
The reason was, they say, the realm of France,
Replete with princes of great parentage,
Ought not admit a governor to rule,
Except he be descended of the male;
And that's the special ground of their contempt,
Wherewith they study to exclude your grace:
But they shall find that forgèd ground of theirs
To be but dusty heaps of brittle sand.
Perhaps, it will be thought a heinous thing,
That I, a Frenchman, should discover this:
But Heaven I call to record of my vows;
It is not hate, nor any private wrong,
But love unto my country, and the right,
Provokes my tongue thus lavish in report:
You are the lineal watchman of our peace,
And John of Valois indirectly climbs:
What then should subjects, but embrace their king?
And wherein may our duty more be seen,
Than, striving to rebate a tyrant's pride,
Place the true shepherd of our commonwealth?
Edw. This counsel, Artois, like to fruitful showers,
Hath added growth unto my dignity:
And, by the fiery vigor of thy words,

Hot courage is engender'd in my breast,
Which heretofore was rak'd in ignorance;
But now doth mount with golden wings of fame,
And will approve fair Isabelle's descent
Able to yoke their stubborn necks with steel
That spurn against my sov'reignty in France.—
[*Cornet within.*
A messenger?— Lord Audley, know from whence.
[*Exit* AUDLEY, *and returns.*
Aud. The Duke of Lorrain, having cross'd the seas,
Entreats he may have conference with your highness.
Edw. Admit him, lords, that we may hear the news.—
[*Exeunt Lords. King takes his state.*

Re-enter Lords; with LORRAIN, *attended.*

Say, Duke of Lorrain, wherefore art thou come?
Lor. The most renownèd prince, King John of France,
Doth greet thee, Edward: and by me commands,
That, for so much as by his liberal gift
The Guyenne dukedom is entail'd to thee,
Thou do him lowly homage for the same:
And, for that purpose, here I summon thee
Repair to France within these forty days,
That there, according as the custom is,
Thou may'st be sworn true liegeman to the king;
Or, else, thy title in that province dies,
And he himself will repossess the place.
Edw. See, how occasion laughs me in the face!
No sooner minded to prepare for France,
But, straight, I am invited; nay, with threats,
Upon a penalty, enjoin'd to come:
'Twere but a foolish part, to say him nay.—
Lorrain, return this answer to thy lord:
I mean to visit him, as he requests;
But how? not servilely dispos'd to bend;
But like a conqueror, to make him bow:
His lame unpolish'd shifts are come to light,
And truth hath pull'd the visard from his face,
That set a gloss upon his arrogance.
Dare he command a fealty in me?
Tell him, the crown, that he usurps, is mine;
And where he sets his foot, he ought to kneel:

'Tis not a petty dukedom that I claim,
But all the whole dominions of the realm;
Which if with grudging he refuse to yield,
I'll take away those borrow'd plumes of his,
And send him naked to the wilderness.

Lor. Then, Edward, here, in sight of all thy lords,
I do pronounce defiance to thy face.

Prince. Defiance, Frenchman? we rebound it back,
Even to the bottom of thy master's throat:
And,— be it spoke with reverence of the king
My gracious father, and these other lords,—
I hold thy message but as scurrilous;
And him, that sent thee, like the lazy drone,
Crept up by stealth unto the eagle's nest;
From whence we'll shake him with so rough a storm,
As others shall be warnèd by his harm.

War. Bid him leave off the lion's case he wears;
Lest, meeting with the lion in the field,
He chance to tear him piecemeal for his pride.

Art. The soundest counsel I can give his grace,
Is, to surrender ere he be constrain'd:
A voluntary mischief hath less scorn,
Than when reproach with violence is borne.

Lor. Degenerate traitor, viper to the place
Where thou wast foster'd in thine infancy,
[*Drawing his sword.*
Bear'st thou a part in this conspiracy?

Edw. Lorrain, behold the sharpness of this steel:
[*Drawing his.*
Fervent desire, that sits against my heart,
Is far more thorny-pricking than this blade;
That, with the nightingale, I shall be scar'd,
As oft as I dispose myself to rest,
Until my colors be display'd in France:
This is thy final answer; so be gone.

Lor. It is not that, nor any English brave,
Afflicts me so, as doth his poison'd view;
That is most false, should most of all be true.
[*Exeunt* LORRAIN, *and Train.*

Edw. Now, lords, our fleeting bark is under sail:
Our gage is thrown; and war is soon begun,
But not so quickly brought unto an end.—

Enter Sir WILLIAM MOUNTAGUE.

But wherefore comes Sir William Mountague?
How stands the league between the Scot and us?
Moun. Crack'd and dissever'd, my renowned lord.
The treacherous king no sooner was inform'd
Of your withdrawing of our army back,
But straight, forgetting of his former oath,
He made invasion on the bordering towns:
Berwick is won; Newcastle spoil'd and lost;
And now the tyrant hath begirt with siege
The castle of Roxborough, where inclos'd
The Countess Salisbury is like to perish.
Edw. That is thy daughter, Warwick, is it not;
Whose husband hath in Bretagne serv'd so long,
About the planting of Lord Montfort there?
War. It is, my lord.
Edw. Ignoble David! hast thou none to grieve,
But silly ladies, with thy threat'ning arms?
But I will make you shrink your snaily horns.—
First, therefore, Audley, this shall be thy charge;
Go levy footmen for our wars in France:—
And, Ned, take muster of our men at arms:
In every shire elect a several band;
Let them be soldiers of a lusty spirit,
Such as dread nothing but dishonor's blot:
Be wary therefore; since we do commence
A famous war, and with so mighty a nation.—
Derby, be thou ambassador for us
Unto our father-in-law, the Earl of Hainault:
Make him acquainted with our enterprise;
And likewise will him, with our own allies,
That are in Flanders, to solicit too
The Emperor of Almaigne in our name.—
Myself, whilst you are jointly thus employ'd,
Will, with these forces that I have at hand,
March, and once more repulse the trait'rous Scots.
But, sirs, be resolute; we shall have wars
On every side:—and, Ned, thou must begin
Now to forget thy study and thy books,
And ure thy shoulders to an armor's weight.
Prince. As cheerful sounding to my youthful spleen

This tumult is of war's increasing broils,
As, at the coronation of a king,
The joyful clamors of the people are,
When, "Ave, Cæsar!" they pronounce aloud;
Within this school of honor I shall learn,
Either to sacrifice my foes to death,
Or in a rightful quarrel spend my breath.
Then cheerfully forward, each a several way;
In great affairs 'tis naught to use delay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Roxborough. Before the Castle.*

Enter Countess of SALISBURY, *and certain of her people, upon the walls.*

Count. Alas, how much in vain my poor eyes gaze
For succor that my sovereign should send!
Ah, cousin Mountague, I fear, thou want'st
The lively spirit sharply to solicit
With vehement suit the king in my behalf:
Thou dost not tell him, what a grief it is
To be the scornful captive to a Scot;
Either to be woo'd with broad untunèd oaths,
Or forc'd by rough insulting barbarism:
Thou dost not tell him, if he here prevail,
How much they will deride us in the north;
And, in their vile, uncivil, skipping jigs,
Bray forth their conquest, and our overthrow,
Even in the barren, bleak, and fruitless air.

Enter King DAVID *and Forces; with* DOUGLAS, LORRAIN, *and others.*

I must withdraw; the everlasting foe
Comes to the wall: I'll closely step aside,
And list their babble, blunt, and full of pride.
[*Retiring behind the works.*

Dav. My Lord of Lorrain, to our brother of France
Commend us, as the man in Christendom
Whom we most reverence, and entirely love.
Touching your embassage, return, and say,
That we with England will not enter parley,
Nor never make fair weather, or take truce;
But burn their neighbor towns, and so persist

With eager roads beyond their city York.
And never shall our bonny riders rest;
Nor rusting canker have the time to eat
Their light-born snaffles, nor their nimble spurs;
Nor lay aside their jacks of gymold mail;
Nor hang their staves of grainèd Scottish ash,
In peaceful wise, upon their city walls;
Nor from their button'd tawny leathern belts
Dismiss their biting whinyards,— 'till your king
Cry out, Enough; spare England now for pity.
Farewell; and tell him, that you leave us here
Before this castle; say, you came from us
Even when we had that yielded to our hands.
Lor. I take my leave; and fairly will return
Your acceptable greeting to my king. [*Exit.*
Dav. Now, Douglas, to our former task again,
For the division of this certain spoil.
Doug. My liege, I crave the lady, and no more.
Dav. Nay, soft ye, sir, first I must make my choice;
And first I do bespeak her for myself.
Doug. Why then, my liege, let me enjoy her jewels.
Dav. Those are her own, still liable to her,
And, who inherits her, has those withal.

Enter a Messenger, hastily.

Mess. My liege, as we were pricking on the hills,
To fetch in booty, marching hitherward
We might descry a mighty host of men:
The sun, reflecting on the armor, show'd
A field of plate, a wood of pikes advanc'd;
Bethink your highness speedily herein:
An easy march within four hours will bring
The hindmost rank unto this place, my liege.
Dav. Dislodge, dislodge, it is the King of England.
Doug. Jemmy my man, saddle my bonny black.
Dav. Mean'st thou to fight, Douglas? we are too weak.
Doug. I know it well, my liege, and therefore flee.
Count. My lords of Scotland, will ye stay and drink?
[*Rising from her concealment.*
Dav. She mocks at us; Douglas, I can't endure it.
Count. Say, good my lord, which is he, must have the lady;

And which, ner jewels? I am sure, my lords,
Ye will not hence, 'till you have shar'd the spoils.
Dav. She heard the messenger, and heard our talk;
And now that comfort makes her scorn at us.

Enter another Messenger.

Mess. Arm, my good lord; O, we are all surpris'd!
Count. After the French ambassador, my liege,
And tell him that you dare not ride to York;
Excuse it, that your bonny horse is lame.
Dav. She heard that too; intolerable grief!—
Woman, farewell: although I do not stay,—
[*Alarums. Exeunt Scots.*
Count. 'Tis not for fear,— and yet you run away.—
O happy comfort, welcome to our house!
The confident and boist'rous boasting Scot,—
That swore before my walls, he would not back,
For all the armèd power of this land,—
With faceless fear, that ever turns his back,
Turn'd hence against the blasting north-east wind,
Upon the bare report and name of arms.

Enter MOUNTAGUE, *and others.*

O summer's day! see where my cousin comes.
Moun. How fares my aunt? Why, aunt, we are not Scots;
Why do you shut your gates against your friends?
Count. Well may I give a welcome, cousin, to thee,
For thou com'st well to chase my foes from hence.
Moun. The king himself is come in person hither;
Dear aunt, descend, and gratulate his highness.
Count. How may I entertain his majesty,
To show my duty, and his dignity? [*Exit, from above.*

Flourish. Enter King EDWARD, WARWICK, ARTOIS, *and others.*

Edw. What, are the stealing foxes fled and gone,
Before we could uncouple at their heels?
War. They are, my liege; but, with a cheerful cry,
Hot hounds, and hardy, chase them at the heels.

Re-enter COUNTESS, *attended.*

Edw. This is the countess, Warwick, is it not?

War. Even she, my liege; whose beauty tyrant fear,
As a May blossom with pernicious winds,
Hath sullied, wither'd, overcast, and done.
Edw. Hath she been fairer, Warwick, than she is?
War. My gracious king, fair is she not at all,
If that herself were by to stain herself,
As I have seen her when she was herself.
Edw. What strange enchantment lurk'd in those her eyes,
When they excell'd this excellence they have,
That now their dim decline hath power to draw
My subject eyes from piercing majesty,
To gaze on her with doting admiration?
Count. In duty lower than the ground I kneel,
And for my dull knees bow my feeling heart,
To witness my obedience to your highness;
With many millions of a subject's thanks
For this your royal presence, whose approach
Hath driven war and danger from my gate.
Edw. Lady, stand up: I come to bring thee peace,
However thereby I have purchas'd war.
Count. No war to you, my liege; the Scots are gone,
And gallop home towards Scotland with their haste.
Edw. Lest yielding here I pine in shameful love,
Come, we'll pursue the Scots; — Artois, away.
Count. A little while, my gracious sovereign, stay,
And let the power of a mighty king
Honor our roof; my husband in the wars,
When he shall hear it, will triumph for joy:
Then, dear my liege, now niggard not thy state;
Being at the wall, enter our homely gate.
Edw. Pardon me, countess, I will come no near;
I dream'd to-night of treason, and I fear.
Count. Far from this place let ugly treason lie!
Edw. No further off, than her conspiring eye;
Which shoots infected poison in my heart,
Beyond repulse of wit, or cure of art.
Now in the sun alone it doth not lie,
With light to take light from a mortal eye;
For here two day-stars, that mine eyes would see,
More than the sun, steal mine own light from me.
Contemplative desire! desire to be

In contemplation, that may master thee!
Warwick, Artois, to horse, and let's away.
Count. What might I speak, to make my sovereign stay?
Edw. What needs a tongue to such a speaking eye,
That more persuades than winning oratory?
Count. Let not thy presence, like the April sun,
Flatter our earth, and suddenly be done.
More happy do not make our outward wall,
Than thou wilt grace our inward house withal.
Our house, my liege, is like a country swain,
Whose habit rude, and manners blunt and plain,
Presageth naught; yet inly beautified
With bounty's riches, and fair hidden pride:
For, where the golden ore doth buried lie,
The ground, undeck'd with nature's tapestry,
Seems barren, sere, unfertile, fruitless, dry;
And where the upper turf of earth doth boast
His pied perfumes, and party-color'd cost,
Delve there, and find this issue, and their pride,
To spring from ordure, and corruption's side.
But, to make up my all too long compare,—
These ragged walls no testimony are
What is within; but, like a cloak, doth hide,
From weather's waste, the under garnish'd pride.
More gracious than my terms can let thee be,
Intreat thyself to stay a while with me.
Edw. As wise as fair; what fond fit can be heard,
When wisdom keeps the gate as beauty's guard?—
Countess, albeit my business urgeth me,
It shall attend, while I attend on thee.—
Come on, my lords, here will I host to-night. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The same. Gardens of the Castle.*

Enter LODOWICK.

Lodowick. I might perceive his eye in her eye lost,
His ear to drink her sweet tongue's utterance;
And changing passion, like inconstant clouds,—
That, rack'd upon the carriage of the winds,
Increase, and die,— in his disturbèd cheeks.

Lo, when she blush'd, even then did he look pale;
As if her cheeks, by some enchanted power,
Attracted had the cherry blood from his:
Anon, with reverent fear when she grew pale,
His cheeks put on their scarlet ornaments;
But no more like her oriental red,
Than brick to coral, or live things to dead.
Why did he then thus counterfeit her looks?
If she did blush, 'twas tender modest shame,
Being in the sacred presence of a king;
If he did blush, 'twas red immodest shame,
To vail his eyes amiss, being a king:
If she look'd pale, 'twas silly woman's fear,
To bear herself in presence of a king;
If he look'd pale, it was with guilty fear,
To dote amiss, being a mighty king:
Then, Scottish wars, farewell; I fear, 'twill prove
A ling'ring English siege of peevish love.
Here comes his highness, walking all alone.

Enter King EDWARD.

Edw. She is grown more fairer far since I came hither;
Her voice more silver every word than other,
Her wit more fluent: what a strange discourse
Unfolded she, of David, and his Scots?
"Even thus," quoth she, "he spake,"—and then spoke broad,
With epithets and accents of the Scots;
But somewhat better than the Scot could speak:
"And thus," quoth she,—and answer'd then herself;
For who could speak like her? but she herself
Breathes from the wall an angel's note from heaven
Of sweet defiance to her barbarous foes.
When she would talk of peace, methinks, her tongue
Commanded war to prison; when of war,
It waken'd Cæsar from his Roman grave,
To hear war beautified by her discourse.
Wisdom is foolishness, but in her tongue;
Beauty a slander, but in her fair face:
There is no summer, but in her cheerful looks;
Nor frosty winter, but in her disdain.
I cannot blame the Scots, that did besiege her,

For she is all the treasure of our land;
But call them cowards, that they ran away,
Having so rich and fair a cause to stay.—
Art thou there, Lodowick? give me ink and paper
Lod. I will, my sovereign.
Edw. And bid the lords hold on their play at chess,
For we will walk and meditate alone.
Lod. I will, my liege. [*Exit.*
Edw. This fellow is well read in poetry,
And hath a lusty and persuasive spirit:
I will acquaint him with my passion;
Which he shall shadow with a veil of lawn,
Through which the queen of beauty's queens shall see
Herself the ground of my infirmity.—

Re-enter LODOWICK.

Hast thou pen, ink, and paper ready, Lodowick?
Lod. Ready, my liege.
Edw. Then in the summer arbor sit by me,
Make it our council-house, or cabinet;
Since green our thoughts, green be the conventicle,
Where we will ease us by disburd'ning them.
Now, Lodowick, invocate some golden muse,
To bring thee hither an enchanted pen,
That may, for sighs, set down true sighs indeed;
Talking of grief, to make thee ready groan;
And, when thou writ'st of tears, encouch the word,
Before, and after, with such sweet laments,
That it may raise drops in a Tartar's eye,
And make a flint heart Scythian pitiful:
For so much moving hath a poet's pen;
Then, if thou be a poet, move thou so,
And be enrichèd by thy sovereign's love.
For, if the touch of sweet concordant strings
Could force attendance in the ears of hell,
How much more shall the strains of poet's wit
Beguile, and ravish, soft and humane minds?
Lod. To whom, my lord, shall I direct my style?
Edw. To one that shames the fair, and sots the wise,
Whose body, as an abstract, or a brief,
Contains each general virtue in the world:
Better than beautiful,— thou must begin;

Devise for fair a fairer word than fair;
And every ornament that thou wouldst praise,
Fly it a pitch above the soar of praise:
For flattery fear thou not to be convicted;
For, were thy admiration ten times more,
Ten times ten thousand more the worth exceeds,
Of that thou art to praise, thy praise's worth.
Begin, I will to contemplate the while:
Forget not to set down, how passionate,
How heart-sick, and how full of languishment,
Her beauty makes me.
Lod. Write I to a woman?
Edw. What beauty else could triumph over me;
Or who, but woman, do our love-lays greet?
What, think'st thou I did bid thee praise a horse?
Lod. Of what condition or estate she is,
'Twere requisite that I should know, my lord.
Edw. Of such a state, that hers is as a throne,
And my estate the footstool where she treads:
Then may'st thou judge what her condition is,
By the proportion of her mightiness.
Write on, while I peruse her in my thoughts.—
Her voice to music, or the nightingale:—
To music every summer-leaping swain
Compares his sun-burnt lover when she speaks:
And why should I speak of the nightingale?
The nightingale sings of adulterate wrong;
And that, compar'd, is too satirical:
For sin, though sin, would not be so esteem'd;
But, rather, virtue sin, sin virtue deem'd.
Her hair, far softer than the silkworm's twist,
Like to a flattering glass, doth make more fair
The yellow amber: like a flattering glass
Comes in too soon; for, writing of her eyes,
I'll say, that like a glass they catch the sun,
And thence the hot reflection doth rebound
Against my breast, and burns my heart within.
Ah, what a world of descant makes my soul
Upon this voluntary ground of love!—
Come, Lodowick, hast thou turn'd thy ink to gold?
If not, write but in letters capital
My mistress' name,

And it will gild thy paper: read, lord, read,
Fill thou the empty hollows of mine ears
With the sweet hearing of thy poetry.
Lod. I have not to a period brought her praise.
Edw. Her praise is as my love, both infinite,
Which apprehend such violent extremes,
That they disdain an ending period.
Her beauty hath no match, but my affection;
Hers more than most, mine most, and more than more:
Hers more to praise, than tell the sea by drops;
Nay, more, than drop the massy earth by sands,
And, sand by sand, print them in memory:
Then wherefore talk'st thou of a period,
To that which craves unended admiration?
Read, let us hear.
Lod. "More fair, and chaste, than is the queen of shades,"—
Edw. That line hath two faults, gross and palpable:
Compar'st thou her to the pale queen of night,
Who, being set in dark, seems therefore light?
What is she, when the sun lifts up his head,
But like a fading taper, dim and dead?
My love shall brave the eye of heaven at noon,
And, being unmask'd, outshine the golden sun.
Lod. What is the other fault, my sovereign lord?
Edw. Read o'er the line again.
Lod. "More fair, and chaste,"—
Edw. I did not bid thee talk of chastity,
To ransack so the treasure of her mind
For I had rather have her chas'd, than chaste.
Out with the moon-line, I will none of it,
And let me have her liken'd to the sun:
Say, she hath thrice more splendor than the sun,
That her perfection emulates the sun,
That she breeds sweets as plenteous as the sun,
That she doth thaw cold winter like the sun,
That she doth cheer fresh summer like the sun,
That she doth dazzle gazers like the sun:
And, in this application to the sun,
Bid her be free and general as the sun;
Who smiles upon the basest weed that grows,

As lovingly as on the fragrant rose.
Let's see what follows that same moon-light line.
Lod. "More fair, and chaste, than is the queen of shades;
More bold in constancy"—
Edw. In constancy! than who?
Lod. —"than Judith was."
Edw. O monstrous line! Put in the next a sword,
And I shall woo her to cut off my head.
Blot, blot, good Lodowick! Let us hear the next.
Lod. There's all that yet is done.
Edw. I thank thee then, thou hast done little ill;
But what is done, is passing passing ill.
No, let the captain talk of boist'rous war;
The prisoner, of immurèd dark constraint;
The sick man best sets down the pangs of death;
The man that starves, the sweetness of a feast;
The frozen soul, the benefit of fire;
And every grief, his happy opposite:
Love cannot sound well, but in lovers' tongues;
Give me the pen and paper, I will write.—

Enter COUNTESS.

But, soft, here comes the treasurer of my spirit.—
Lodowick, thou know'st not how to draw a battle;
These wings, these flankers, and these squadrons
Argue in thee defective discipline:
Thou shouldst have plac'd this here, this other here.
Count. Pardon my boldness, my thrice gracious lord;
Let my intrusion here be call'd my duty,
That comes to see my sovereign how he fares.
Edw. Go, draw the same, I tell thee in what form.
Lod. I go. [*Exit.*
Count. Sorry I am, to see my liege so sad:
What may thy subject do, to drive from thee
Thy gloomy consort, sullen melancholy?
Edw. Ah, lady, I am blunt, and cannot strew
The flowers of solace in a ground of shame:—
Since I came hither, countess, I am wrong'd.
Count. Now, God forbid, that any in my house
Should think my sovereign wrong! Thrice-gentle king,
Acquaint me with your cause of discontent.

Edw. How near then shall I be to remedy?
Count. As near, my liege, as all my woman's power
Can pawn itself to buy thy remedy.
Edw. If thou speak'st true, then have I my redress:
Engage thy power to redeem my joys,
And I am joyful, countess; else, I die.
Count. I will, my liege.
Edw. Swear, countess, that thou wilt.
Count. By Heaven, I will.
Edw. Then take thyself a little way aside;
And tell thyself, a king doth dote on thee:
Say, that within thy power it doth lie,
To make him happy; and that thou hast sworn,
To give me all the joy within thy power:
Do this; and tell me, when I shall be happy.
Count. All this is done, my thrice-dread sovereign:
That power of love, that I have power to give,
Thou hast with all devout obedience;
Employ me how thou wilt in proof thereof.
Edw. Thou hear'st me say, that I do dote on thee.
Count. If on my beauty, take it if thou canst;
Though little, I do prize it ten times less:
If on my virtue, take it if thou canst;
For virtue's store by giving doth augment:
Be it on what it will, that I can give,
And thou canst take away, inherit it.
Edw. It is thy beauty that I would enjoy.
Count. O, were it painted, I would wipe it off,
And dispossess myself, to give it thee.
But, sovereign, it is solder'd to my life;
Take one, and both; for, like an humble shadow,
It haunts the sunshine of my summer's life.
Edw. But thou may'st lend it me, to sport withal.
Count. As easy may my intellectual soul
Be lent away, and yet my body live,
As lend my body, palace to my soul,
Away from her, and yet retain my soul.
My body is her bower, her court, her abbey,
And she an angel, pure, divine, unspotted;
If I should lend her house, my lord, to thee,
I kill my poor soul, and my poor soul me.
Edw. Didst thou not swear, to give me what I would?

Count. I did, my liege; so, what you would, I could.
Edw. I wish no more of thee, than thou may'st give:
Nor beg I do not, but I rather buy,
That is, thy love; and, for that love of thine,
In rich exchange, I tender to thee mine.
Count. But that your lips were sacred, O my lord,
You would profane the holy name of love:
That love, you offer me, you cannot give;
For Cæsar owes that tribute to his queen:
That love, you beg of me, I cannot give;
For Sarah owes that duty to her lord.
He, that doth clip, or counterfeit, your stamp,
Shall die, my lord: and will your sacred self
Commit high treason against the King of heaven,
To stamp his image in forbidden metal,
Forgetting your allegiance, and your oath?
In violating marriage' sacred law,
You break a greater honor than yourself:
To be a king, is of a younger house,
Than to be married; your progenitor,
Sole-reigning Adam on the universe,
By God was honor'd for a married man,
But not by him anointed for a king.
It is a penalty, to break your statutes,
Though not enacted by your highness' hand:
How much more, to infringe the holy act
Made by the mouth of God, seal'd with his hand?
I know, my sovereign — in my husband's love,
Who now doth loyal service in his wars —
Doth but to try the wife of Salisbury,
Whether she will hear a wanton's tale, or no;
Lest being therein guilty by my stay,
From that, not from my liege, I turn away. [*Exit.*
Edw. Whether is her beauty by her words divine;
Or are her words sweet chaplains to her beauty?
Like as the wind doth beautify a sail,
And as a sail becomes the unseen wind,
So do her words her beauty, beauty words.
O, that I were a honey gathering bee,
To bear the comb of virtue from his flower;
And not a poison-sucking envious spider,
To turn the vice I take to deadly venom!

Religion is austere, and beauty gentle;
Too strict a guardian for so fair a ward.
O, that she were, as is the air, to me!
Why, so she is; for when I would embrace her,
This do I, and catch nothing but myself.
I must enjoy her; for I cannot beat,
With reason, and reproof, fond love away.

Enter WARWICK.

Here comes her father: I will work with him,
To bear my colors in this field of love.
War. How is it, that my sovereign is so sad?
May I with pardon know your highness' grief,
And that my old endeavor will remove it,
It shall not cumber long your majesty.
Edw. A kind and voluntary gift thou proffer'st,
That I was forward to have begg'd of thee.
But, O thou world, great nurse of flattery,
Why dost thou tip men's tongues with golden words,
And peise their deeds with weight of heavy lead,
That fair performance cannot follow promise?
O, that a man might hold the heart's close book;
And choke the lavish tongue, when it doth utter
The breath of falsehood not charácter'd there!
War. Far be it from the honor of my age,
That I should owe bright gold, and render lead!
Age is a cynic, not a flatterer:
I say again, that, if I knew your grief,
And that by me it may be lessenèd,
My proper harm should buy your highness' good.
Edw. These are the vulgar tenders of false men
That never pay the duty of their words.
Thou wilt not stick to swear what thou hast said;
But, when thou know'st my grief's condition,
This rash-disgorgèd vomit of thy word
Thou wilt eat up again, and leave me helpless.
War. By Heaven, I will not; though your majesty
Did bid me run upon your sword, and die.
Edw. Say, that my grief is no way med'cinable,
But by the loss and bruising of thine honor?
War. If nothing but that loss may vantage you,
I would account that loss my vantage too.

Edw. Think'st, that thou canst unswear thy oath again?
War. I cannot; nor I would not, if I could.
Edw. But, if thou dost, what shall I say to thee?
War. What may be said to any perjur'd villain
That breaks the sacred warrant of an oath.
Edw. What wilt thou say to one that breaks an oath?
War. That he hath broke his faith with God and man,
And from them both stands excommunicate.
Edw. What office were it, to suggest a man
To break a lawful and religious vow?
War. An office for the devil, not for man.
Edw. That devil's office must thou do for me;
Or break thy oath, or cancel all the bonds
Of love, and duty, 'twixt thyself and me.
And therefore, Warwick, if thou art thyself,
The lord and master of thy word and oath,
Go to thy daughter; and in my behalf,
Command her, woo her, win her any ways,
To be my mistress, and my secret love.
I will not stand to hear thee make reply;
Thy oath break hers, or let thy sovereign die. [*Exit.*
War. O doting king! O detestable office!
Well may I tempt myself to wrong myself,
When he hath sworn me by the name of God,
To break a vow made by the name of God.
What if I swear by this right hand of mine,
To cut this right hand off? the better way
Were, to profane the idol, than confound it:
But neither will I do; I'll keep my oath,
And to my daughter make a recantation
Of all the virtue I have preach'd to her:
I'll say, she must forget her husband Salisbury,
If she remember, to embrace the king;
I'll say, an oath may easily be broken,
But not so easily pardon'd, being broken;
I'll say, it is true charity to love,
But not true love to be so charitable;
I'll say, his greatness may bear out the shame,
But not his kingdom can buy out the sin;

I'll say, it is my duty to persuade,
But not her honesty to give consent.

Enter COUNTESS.

See, where she comes : was never father, had,
Against his child, an embassage so bad.
Count. My lord and father, I have sought for you :
My mother and the peers impórtune you,
To keep in presence of his majesty,
And do your best to make his highness merry.
War. How shall I enter on this graceless errand ?
I must not call her child ; for where's the father
That will, in such a suit, seduce his child ?
Then, Wife of Salisbury,— shall I so begin ?
No, he's my friend ; and where is found the friend,
That will do friendship such endamagement ? —
Neither my daughter, nor my dear friend's wife,
I am not Warwick, as thou think'st I am,
But an attorney from the court of hell ;
That thus have hous'd my spirit in his form,
To do a message to thee from the king.
The mighty King of England dotes on thee :
He, that hath power to take away thy life,
Hath power to take thine honor ; then consent
To pawn thine honor, rather than thy life :
Honor is often lost, and got again ;
But life, once gone, hath no recovery.
The sun, that withers hay, doth nourish grass ;
The king, that would distain thee, will advance thee.
The poets write, that great Achilles' spear
Could heal the wound it made : the moral is,
What mighty men misdo, they can amend.
The lion doth become his bloody jaws,
And grace his foragement, by being mild
When vassal fear lies trembling at his feet.
The king will in his glory hide thy shame ;
And those, that gaze on him to find out thee,
Will lose their eyesight, looking in the sun.
What can one drop of poison harm the sea,
Whose hugy vastures can digest the ill,
And make it lose his operation ?
The king's great name will temper thy misdeeds,

And give the bitter potion of reproach
A sugar'd-sweet and most delicious taste:
Besides, it is no harm, to do the thing
Which, without shame, could not be left undone.
Thus have I, in his majesty's behalf,
Apparel'd sin in virtuous sentences,
And dwell upon thy answer in his suit.

Count. Unnatural besiege! Woe me unhappy,
To have escap'd the danger of my foes,
And to be ten times worse inwir'd by friends!
Hath he no means to stain my honest blood,
But to corrupt the author of my blood,
To be his scandalous and vile solicitor?
No marvel then, though the branches be infected,
When poison hath encompassèd the root:
No marvel, though the leprous infant die,
When the stern dam envenometh the dug.
Why then, give sin a passport to offend,
And youth the dangerous rein of liberty:
Blot out the strict forbidding of the law;
And cancel every canon, that prescribes
A shame for shame, or penance for offense.
No, let me die, if his too boist'rous will
Will have it so, before I will consent
To be an actor in his graceless lust.

War. Why, now thou speak'st as I would have thee speak:
And mark how I unsay my words again.
An honorable grave is more esteem'd,
Than the polluted closet of a king:
The greater man, the greater is the thing,
Be it good or bad, that he shall undertake:
An unreputed mote, flying in the sun,
Presents a greater substance than it is:
The freshest summer's day doth soonest taint
The loathèd carrion that it seems to kiss:
Deep are the blows made with a mighty ax:
That sin doth ten times aggravate itself,
That is committed in a holy place:
An evil deed, done by authority,
Is sin, and subornation: deck an ape
In tissue, and the beauty of the robe

Adds but the greater scorn unto the beast.
A spacious field of reasons could I urge,
Between his glory, daughter, and thy shame:
That poison shows worst in a golden cup;
Dark night seems darker by the lightning flash;
Lilies, that fester, smell far worse than weeds;
And every glory that inclines to sin,
The same is treble by the opposite.
So leave I, with my blessing in thy bosom;
Which then convert to a most heavy curse,
When thou convert'st from honor's golden name
To the black faction of bed-blotting shame! [*Exit.*

Count. I'll follow thee; and, when my mind turns so,
My body sink my soul in endless woe! [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The Same. A room in the Castle.*

Enter DERBY *and* AUDLEY, *meeting.*

Der. Thrice-noble Audley, well encounter'd here:
How is it with our sovereign, and his peers?

Aud. 'Tis full a fortnight, since I saw his highness,
What time he sent me forth to muster men;
Which I accordingly have done, and bring them hither
In fair array before his majesty.
What news, my Lord of Derby, from the emperor?

Der. As good as we desire: the emperor
Hath yielded to his highness friendly aid;
And makes our king lieutenant-general,
In all his lands and large dominions:
Then via for the spacious bounds of France!

Aud. What, doth his highness leap to hear these news?

Der. I have not yet found time to open them;
The king is in his closet, malcontent,
For what, I know not, but he gave in charge,
'Till after dinner, none should interrupt him:
The Countess Salisbury, and her father Warwick,
Artois, and all, look underneath the brows.

Aud. Undoubtedly, then something is amiss.
[*Trumpet within.*

Der. The trumpets sound; the king is now abroad.

Enter EDWARD.

Aud. Here comes his highness.
Der. Befall my sovereign all my sovereign's wish!
Edw. Ah, that thou wert a witch, to make it so!
Der. The emperor greeteth you: [*Presenting letters.*
Edw. 'Would it were the countess!
Der. And hath accorded to your highness' suit.
Edw. Thou liest, she hath not; but I would, she had!
Aud. All love, and duty, to my lord the king!
Edw. Well, all but one is none:—what news with you?
Aud. I have, my liege, levied those horse and foot,
According to your charge, and brought them hither.
Edw. Then let those foot trudge hence upon those horse,
According to our discharge, and be gone.—
Derby, I'll look upon the countess' mind
Anon.
Der. The countess' mind, my liege?
Edw. I mean the emperor: leave me alone.
Aud. What's in his mind?
Der. Let's leave him to his humor.
[*Exeunt Derby and Audley.*
Edw. Thus from the heart's abundance speaks the tongue;
Countess for emperor: and, indeed, why not?
She is as imperator over me;
And I to her
Am as a kneeling vassal, that observes
The pleasure, or displeasure, of her eye.—

Enter LODOWICK.

What says the more than Cleopatra's match
To Cæsar now?
Lod. That yet, my liege, ere night
She will resolve your majesty. [*Drum within.*
Edw. What drum is this, that thunders forth this march,
To start the tender Cupid in my bosom?
Poor sheep-skin, how it brawls with him that beateth it!
Go, break the thund'ring parchment bottom out,

And I will teach it to conduct sweet lines
Unto the bosom of a heavenly nymph :
For I will use it as my writing-paper ;
And so reduce him, from a scolding drum,
To be the herald, and dear counsel-bearer,
Betwixt a goddess and a mighty king.
Go, bid the drummer learn to touch the lute,
Or hang him in the braces of his drum ;
For now we think it an uncivil thing,
To trouble heaven with such harsh resounds :
Away.— [*Exit Lodowick.*
The quarrel, that I have, requires no arms,
But these of mine ; and these shall meet my foe
In a deep march of penetrable groans :
My eyes shall be my arrows ; and my sighs
Shall serve me as the ventage of the wind,
To whirl away my sweet'st artillery :
Ah but, alas, she wins the sun of me,
For that is she herself ; and thence it comes,
That poets term the wanton warrior, blind ;
But love hath eyes as judgment to his steps,
'Till too much lovèd glory dazzles them.—

Re-enter LODOWICK.

How now ?
Lod. My liege, the drum, that struck the lusty march,
Stands with Prince Edward, your thrice-valiant son.

Enter PRINCE. LODOWICK *retires to the door.*

Edw. I see the boy. O, how his mother's face,
Molded in his, corrects my stray'd desire,
And rates my heart, and chides my thievish eye ;
Who being rich enough in seeing her,
Yet seeks elsewhere : and basest theft is that,
Which cannot cloke itself on poverty.—
Now, boy, what news ?
Prince. I have assembled, my dear lord and father,
The choicest buds of all our English blood,
For our affairs to France ; and here we come,
To take direction from your majesty.
Edw. Still do I see in him delineate
His mother's visage ; those his eyes are hers,

Who, looking wistly on me, make me blush;
For faults against themselves give evidence:
Lust is a fire; and men, like lanthorns, show
Light lust within themselves, even through themselves.
Away, loose silks of wavering vanity!
Shall the large limit of fair Britany
By me be overthrown? and shall I not
Master this little mansion of myself?
Give me an armor of eternal steel;
I go to conquer kings; and shall I then
Subdue myself, and be my enemy's friend?
It must not be.— Come, boy, forward, advance!
Let's with our colors beat the air of France.

Lod. My liege, the countess, with a smiling cheer,
Desires access unto your majesty.

[*Advancing from the door, and whispering him.*

Edw. Why, there it goes! that very smile of hers
Hath ransom'd captive France; and set the king,
The Dauphin, and the peers, at liberty.—
Go, leave me, Ned, and revel with thy friends.

[*Exit Prince.*

Thy mother is but black; and thou, like her,
Dost put into my mind how foul she is.—
Go, fetch the countess hither in thy hand,
And let her chase away those winter clouds;
For she gives beauty both to heaven and earth.

[*Exit Lodowick.*

The sin is more, to hack and hew poor men,
Than to embrace, in an unlawful bed,
The register of all varieties
Since leathern Adam 'till this youngest hour.

Re-enter LODOWICK, *with the* COUNTESS.

Go, Lodowick, put thy hand into my purse,
Play, spend, give, riot, waste; do what thou wilt,
So thou wilt hence a while, and leave me here.

[*Exit Lodowick.*

Now, my soul's playfellow! and art thou come,
To speak the more than heavenly word, of yea,
To my subjection in thy beauteous love?

Count. My father on his blessing hath commanded —

Edw. That thou shalt yield to me.

Count. Ay, dear my liege, your due.
Edw. And that, my dearest love, can be no less
Than right for right, and tender love for love.
Count. Than wrong for wrong, and endless hate for hate.—
But,— sith I see your majesty so bent,
That my unwillingness, my husband's love,
Your high estate, nor no respect respected
Can be my help, but that your mightiness
Will overbear and awe these dear regards,—
I bind my discontent to my content,
And, what I would not, I'll compel I will;
Provided, that yourself remove those lets,
That stand between your highness' love and mine.
Edw. Name them, fair countess, and, by Heaven, I will.
Count. It is their lives, that stand between our love,
That I would have chok'd up, my sovereign.
Edw. Whose lives, my lady?
Count. My thrice-loving liege,
Your queen, and Salisbury my wedded husband;
Who living have that title in our love,
That we cannot bestow but by their death.
Edw. Thy opposition is beyond our law.
Count. And so is your desire: if the law
Can hinder you to execute the one,
Let it forbid you to attempt the other:
I cannot think you love me as you say,
Unless you do make good what you have sworn.
Edw. No more; thy husband and the queen shall die.
Fairer thou art by far than Hero was;
Beardless Leander not so strong as I:
He swum an easy current for his love;
But I will through a helly spout of blood,
To arrive at Sestos where my Hero lies.
Count. Nay, you'll do more; you'll make the river too,
With their heart-bloods that keep our love asunder,
Of which, my husband, and your wife, are twain.
Edw. Thy beauty makes them guilty of their death,
And gives in evidence, that they shall die;
Upon which verdict, I, their judge, condemn them.
Count. O perjur'd beauty! more corrupted judge!

When, to the great star-chamber o'er our heads,
The universal sessions calls to count
This packing evil, we both shall tremble for it.
Edw. What says my fair love? is she resolute?
Count. Resolv'd to be dissolv'd; and, therefore, this,—
Keep but thy word, great king, and I am thine.
Stand where thou dost, I'll part a little from thee,
And see how I will yield me to thy hands.
[*Turning suddenly upon him, and showing two daggers.*
Here by my side do hang my wedding knives:
Take thou the one, and with it kill thy queen,
And learn by me to find her where she lies;
And with this other I'll despatch my love,
Which now lies fast asleep within my heart:
When they are gone, then I'll consent to love.
Stir not, lascivious king, to hinder me;
My resolution is more nimbler far,
Than thy prevention can be in my rescue,
And, if thou stir, I strike: therefore stand still,
And hear the choice that I will put thee to:
Either swear to leave thy most unholy suit,
And never henceforth to solicit me;
Or else, by Heaven, [*kneeling*] this sharp-pointed knife
Shall stain thy earth with that which thou wouldst stain,
My poor chaste blood. Swear, Edward, swear,
Or I will strike, and die, before thee here.
Edw. Even by that power I swear, that gives me now
The power to be ashamèd of myself,
I never mean to part my lips again
In any word that tends to such a suit.
Arise, true English lady; whom our isle
May better boast of, than e'er Roman might
Of her, whose ransack'd treasury hath task'd
The vain endeavor of so many pens:
Arise; and be my fault thy honor's fame,
Which after-ages shall enrich thee with.
I am awakèd from this idle dream; —
Warwick, my son, Derby, Artois, and Audley,
Brave warriors all, where are you all this while?

Enter PRINCE *and lords.*

Warwick, I make thee warden of the north : —
You, Prince of Wales, and Audley, straight to sea;
Scour to Newhaven ; some, there stay for me : —
Myself, Artois, and Derby, will through Flanders,
To greet our friends there, and to crave their aid :
This night will scarce suffice me, to discover
My folly's siege against a faithful lover ;
For, ere the sun shall gild the eastern sky,
We'll wake him with our martial harmony. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Flanders. The French Camp.*

Enter King JOHN *of France; his two Sons,* CHARLES *Duke of Normandy, and* PHILIP ; *Duke of* LORRAIN *and others.*

John. Here, 'till our navy, of a thousand sail,
Have made a breakfast to our foe by sea,
Let us encamp, to wait their happy speed.—
Lorrain, what readiness is Edward in ?
How hast thou heard that he provided is
Of martial furniture for this exploit ?
Lor. To lay aside unnecessary soothing,
And not to spend the time in circumstance,
'Tis bruited for a certainty, my lord,
That he's exceeding strongly fortified ;
His subjects flock as willingly to war,
As if unto a triumph they were led.
Char. England was wont to harbor malcontents,
Blood-thirsty and seditious Catilines,
Spendthrifts, and such as gape for nothing else
But change and alteration of the state ;
And is it possible, that they are now
So loyal in themselves ?
Lor. All but the Scot ; who solemnly protests,
As heretofore I have inform'd his grace,
Never to sheathe his sword, or take a truce.
John. Ah, that's the anchorage of some better hope !
But, on the other side, to think what friends
King Edward hath retain'd in Netherland,

Among those ever-bibbing epicures,
Those frothy Dutchmen, puff'd with double beer,
That drink and swill in every place they come,
Doth not a little aggravate mine ire:
Besides, we hear, the emperor conjoins,
And stalls him in his own authority:
But, all the mightier that their number is,
The greater glory reaps the victory.
Some friends have we, beside domestic power;
The stern Polonian, and the warlike Dane,
The King of Bohemia, and of Sicily,
Are all become confederates with us,
And, as I think, are marching hither apace.
[*Drum within.*
But, soft, I hear the music of their drums,
By which I guess that their approach is near.

Enter BOHEMIA, *and forces; and aid of Danes, Poles, and Muscovites.*

Boh. King John of France, as league, and neighborhood
Requires, when friends are any way distress'd,
I come to aid thee with my country's force.
Pole. And from great Moscow, fearful to the Turk,
And lofty Poland, nurse of hardy men,
I bring these servitors to fight for thee,
Who willingly will venture in thy cause.
John. Welcome, Bohemian king; and welcome, all:
This your great kindness I will not forget;
Beside your plentiful rewards in crowns,
That from our treasury ye shall receive;
There comes a hair-brain'd nation, deck'd in pride,
The spoil of whom will be a treble game.—
And now my hope is full, my joy complete:
At sea, we are as puissant as the force
Of Agamemnon in the haven of Troy;
By land, with Xerxes we compare of strength,
Whose soldiers drank up rivers in their thirst:
Then, Bayard-like, blind over-weening Ned,
To reach at our imperial diadem,
Is, either to be swallow'd of the waves,
Or hack'd a-pieces when thou com'st ashore.

Enter a Mariner.

Mar. Near to the coast I have descried, my lord,
As I was busy in my watchful charge,
The proud armado of King Edward's ships:
Which, at the first, far off when I did ken,
Seem'd as it were a grove of wither'd pines;
But, drawing near, their glorious bright aspect,
Their streaming ensigns wrought of color'd silk,
Like to a meadow full of sundry flowers,
Adorns the naked bosom of the earth:
Majestical the order of their course,
Figuring the hornèd circle of the moon:
On the top-gallant of the admiral,
And likewise all the handmaids of his train,
The arms of England and of France united
Are quarter'd equally by herald's art.
Thus, tightly carried with a merry gale,
They plow the ocean hitherward amain.

John. Dare he already crop the flower-de-luce?
I hope, the honey being gather'd thence,
He, with the spider, afterward approach'd,
Shall suck forth deadly venom from the leaves.—
But where's our navy? how are they prepar'd
To wing themselves against this flight of ravens?

Mar. They, having knowledge brought them by the scouts,
Did break from anchor straight; and, puff'd with rage,
No otherwise than were their sails with wind,
Made forth; as when the empty eagle flies,
To satisfy his hungry griping maw.

John. There's for thy news. Return unto thy bark;
And, if thou scape the bloody stroke of war,
And do survivé the conflict, come again,
And let us hear the manner of the fight.—

[*Exit Mariner.*

Mean space, my lords, 'tis best we be dispers'd
To several places, lest they chance to land:
First, you, my lord, with your Bohemian troops,
Shall pitch your battles on the lower hand;
My eldest son, the Duke of Normandy,
Together with this aid of Muscovites,

Shall climb the higher ground another way;
Here in the middle coast, betwixt you both,
Philip, my youngest boy, and I will lodge.
So, lords, be gone, and look unto your charge;
You stand for France, an empire fair and large.—
[*Exeunt Charles, Lorrain, Bohemia, and Forces.*
Now tell me, Philip, what is thy conceit,
Touching the challenge that the English make?
Phi. I say, my lord, claim Edward what he can,
And bring he ne'er so plain a pedigree,
'Tis you are in possession of the crown,
And that's the surest point of all the law:
But, were it not; yet, ere he should prevail,
I'll make a conduit of my dearest blood,
Or chase those straggling upstarts home again.
John. Well said, young Philip! Call for bread and wine,
That we may cheer our stomachs with repast,
To look our foes more sternly in the face.
[*A table and provisions brought in; King and his Son sit down to it. Ordnance afar off.*
Now is begun the heavy day at sea.
Fight, Frenchmen, fight; be like the field of bears,
When they defend their younglings in their caves!
Steer, angry Nemesis, the happy helm;
That, with the sulphur battles of your rage,
The English fleet may be dispers'd, and sunk!
[*Ordnance again.*
Phi. O, father, how this echoing cannon-shot,
Like sweetest harmony, digests my cates!
John. Now, boy, thou hear'st what thund'ring terror 'tis,
To buckle for a kingdom's sovereignty:
The earth, with giddy trembling when it shakes,
Or when the exhalations of the air
Break in extremity of lightning flash,
Affrights not more, than kings, when they dispose
To show the rancor of their high-swoln hearts.
[*Retreat heard.*
Retreat is sounded: one side hath the worse:
O, if it be the French!— Sweet Fortune, turn;
And, in thy turning, change the froward winds,

That, with advantage of a favoring sky,
Our men may vanquish, and the other fly!

Enter Mariner.

My heart misgives: — say, mirror of pale death,
To whom belongs the honor of this day?
Relate, I pray thee, if thy breath will serve,
The sad discourse of this discomfiture.
Mar. I will, my lord.
My gracious sovereign, France hath ta'en the foil,
And boasting Edward triumphs with success.
These iron-hearted navies,
When last I was reporter to your grace,
Both full of angry spleen, of hope, and fear,
Hasting to meet each other in the face,
At last conjoin'd; and by their admiral
Our admiral encounter'd many shot:
By this, the other, that beheld these twain
Give earnest penny of a further wrack,
Like fiery dragons took their haughty flight;
And, likewise meeting, from their smoky wombs
Sent many grim ambassadors of death.
Then 'gan the day to turn to gloomy night;
And darkness did as well inclose the quick,
As those that were but newly reft of life:
No leisure serv'd for friends to bid farewell;
And, if it had, the hideous noise was such,
As each to other seemèd deaf, and dumb:
Purple the sea; whose channel fill'd as fast
With streaming gore, that from the maimèd fell,
As did her gushing moisture break into
The crannied cleftures of the through-shot planks:
Here flew a head, dissever'd from the trunk;
There mangled arms, and legs, were toss'd aloft;
As when a whirlwind takes the summer dust,
And scatters it in middle of the air:
Then might ye see the reeling vessels split,
And tottering sink into the ruthless flood,
Until their lofty tops were seen no more.
All shifts were tried, both for defense and hurt:
And now the effect of valor, and of fear,
Of resolution, and of cowardice,

We lively pictur'd; how the one for fame,
The other by compulsion laid about:
Much did the Nonpareille, that brave ship;
So did the black-snake of Boulogne, than which
A bonnier vessel never yet spread sail:
But all in vain; both sun, the wind and tide,
Revolted all unto our foemen's side,
That we perforce were fain to give them way,
And they are landed: thus my tale is done;
We have untimely lost, and they have won.

John. Then rests there nothing, but, with present speed,
To join our several forces all in one,
And bid them battle, ere they range too far.—
Come, gentle Philip, let us hence depart;
This soldier's words have pierc'd thy father's heart.

SCENE II. *Picardy. Fields near Cressi.*

Enter a Frenchman, meeting certain others, a Woman and two Children, laden with household stuff, as removing.

First F. Well met, my masters: how now? what's the news?
And wherefore are you laden thus with stuff?
What, is it quarter-day, that you remove,
And carry bag and baggage too?

Sec. F. Quarter-day? ay, and quartering day, I fear:
Have you not heard the news that flies abroad?

First F. What news?

Third F. How the French navy is destroy'd at sea,
And that the English army is arriv'd.

First F. What then?

Sec. F. What then, quoth you? why, is't not time to fly,
When enemy and destruction is so nigh?

First F. Content thee, man: they are far enough from hence;
And will be met, I warrant you, to their cost,
Before they break so far into the realm.

Sec. F. Ay, so the grasshopper doth spend the time
In mirthful jollity, 'till winter come;
And then too late he would redeem his time,

When frozen cold hath nipp'd his careless head.
He, that no sooner will provide a cloak,
Than when he sees it doth begin to rain,
May, peradventure, for his negligence,
Be throughly wash'd when he suspects it not.
We, that have charge, and such a train as this,
Must look in time to look for them and us,
Lest, when we would, we cannot be reliev'd.
First F. Belike, you then despair of all success,
And think your country will be subjugate.
Third F. We cannot tell; 'tis good, to fear the worst.
First F. Yet rather fight, than, like unnatural sons,
Forsake your loving parents in distress.
Sec. F. Tush, they, that have already taken arms,
Are many fearful millions, in respect
Of that small handful of our enemies:
But 'tis a rightful quarrel must prevail;
Edward is son unto our late king's sister,
Where John Valois is three degrees remov'd.
Wom. Besides, there goes a prophecy abroad,
Publish'd by one that was a friar once,
Whose oracles have many times prov'd true;
And now he says, "The time will shortly come,
When as a lion, rousèd in the west,
Shall carry hence the flower-de-luce of France:"
These, I can tell ye, and such-like surmises
Strike many Frenchmen cold unto the heart.

Enter another Frenchman, hastily.

Fourth F. Fly, countrymen, and citizens of France!
Sweet-flow'ring peace, the root of happy life,
Is quite abandon'd and expuls'd the land:
Instead of whom, ransack-constraining war
Sits raven-like upon your houses' tops;
Slaughter and mischief walk within your streets,
And unrestrain'd, make havoc as they pass:
The form whereof even now myself beheld,
Now, upon this fair mountain, whence I came.
For so far off as I direct mine eyes,
I might perceive five cities all on fire,
Corn-fields, and vineyards, burning like an oven;
And, as the reeking vapor in the wind

Turn'd but aside, I likewise might discern
The poor inhabitants, escap'd the flame,
Fall numberless upon the soldiers' pikes:
Three ways these dreadful ministers of wrath
Do tread the measures of their tragic march;
Upon the right hand comes the conquering king,
Upon the left his hot unbridled son,
And in the midst our nation's glittering host;
All which, though distant, yet conspire in one
To leave a desolation where they come.
Fly, therefore, citizens, if you be wise,
Seek out some habitation further off:
Here if you stay, your wives will be abus'd,
Your treasure shar'd before your weeping eyes;
Shelter yourselves, for now the storm doth rise;
Away, away! methinks, I hear their drums:—
Ah, wretched France, I greatly fear thy fall;
Thy glory shaketh like a tottering wall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same.*

Drums. Enter King EDWARD, *marching;* DERBY, *&c., and Forces, and* GOBIN DE GREY.

Edw. Where is the Frenchman, by whose cunning guidance
We found the shallow of this river Somme,
And had direction how to pass the sea?
Gob. Here, my good lord.
Edw. How art thou call'd? thy name?
Gob. Gobin de Grey, if please your excellence.
Edw. Then, Gobin, for the service thou hast done,
We here enlarge and give thee liberty;
And, for a recompense, beside this good,
Thou shalt receive five hundred marks in gold.—
I know not how, we should have met our son;
Whom now in heart I wish I might behold.

Enter ARTOIS.

Art. Good news, my lord; the prince is hard at hand,
And with him comes Lord Audley, and the rest,
Whom since our landing we could never meet.

Drums. Enter PRINCE, AUDLEY, *and Forces.*

Edw. Welcome, fair prince! How hast thou sped, my son,
Since thy arrival on the coast of France?
Prince. Successfully, I thank the gracious heavens:
Some of their strongest cities we have won,
As Harfleur, Lo, Crotage, and Carentan;
And others wasted; leaving at our heels
A wide apparent field, and beaten path,
For solitariness to progress in:
Yet, those that would submit, we kindly pardon'd;
But who in scorn refus'd our proffer'd peace,
Endur'd the penalty of sharp revenge.
Edw. Ah, France, why shouldst thou be thus obstinate
Against the kind embracement of thy friends?
How gently had we thought to touch thy breast,
And set our foot upon thy tender mold,
But that, in froward and disdainful pride,
Thou, like a skittish and untamèd colt,
Dost start aside, and strike us with thy heels? —
But tell me, Ned, in all thy warlike course
Hast thou not seen the usurping King of France?
Prince. Yes, my good lord, and not two hours ago,
With full an hundred thousand fighting men,
Upon the one side o' the river's bank,
I on the other; with his multitudes
I fear'd he would have cropp'd our smaller power:
But, happily, perceiving your approach,
He hath withdrawn himself to Cressi plains;
Where, as it seemeth by his good array,
He means to bid us battle presently.
Edw. He shall be welcome, that's the thing we crave.

Drums. Enter King JOHN; CHARLES *and* PHILIP, *his Sons;* BOHEMIA, LORRAIN, *&c., and Forces.*

John. Edward, know, that John, the true King of France,—
Musing thou shouldst encroach upon his land,
And, in thy tyrannous proceeding, slay
His faithful subjects, and subvert his towns,—

Spits in thy face; and in this manner following
Upbraids thee with thine arrogant intrusion.
First, I condemn thee for a fugitive,
A thievish pirate, and a needy mate;
One, that hath either no abiding place,
Or else, inhabiting some barren soil,
Where neither herb nor fruitful grain is had,
Dost altogether live by pilfering:
Next,— insomuch thou hast infring'd thy faith,
Broke league and solemn covenant made with me,—
I hold thee for a false pernicious wretch:
And last of all,— although I scorn to cope
With one such an inferior to myself;
Yet, in respect thy thirst is all for gold,
Thy labor rather to be fear'd than lov'd,—
To satisfy thy lust in either part,
Here am I come; and with me I have brought
Exceeding store of treasure, pearl, and coin.
Leave therefore now to persecute the weak;
And, armèd ent'ring conflict with the arm'd,
Let it be seen, 'mongst other petty thefts,
How thou canst win this pillage manfully.

Edw. If gall, or wormwood, have a pleasant taste,
Then is thy salutation honey-sweet:
But as the one hath no such property,
So is the other most satirical.
Yet wot how I regard thy worthless taunts;—
If thou have utter'd them to soil my fame,
Or dim the reputation of my birth,
Know, that thy wolfish barking cannot hurt:
If slyly to insinuate with the world,
And with a strumpet's artificial line
To paint thy vicious and deformèd cause,
Be well assur'd, the counterfeit will fade,
And in the end thy foul defects be seen:
But if thou didst it to provoke me on,—
As who should say, I were but timorous,
Or, coldly negligent, did need a spur,—
Bethink thyself, how slack I was at sea;
How, since my landing, I have won no towns,
Enter'd no further but upon the coast,
And there have ever since securely slept,

But if I have been otherwise employ'd,
Imagine, Valois, whether I intend
To skirmish, not for pillage, but for the crown
Which thou dost wear; and that I vow to have,
Or one of us shall fall into his grave.
Prince. Look not for cross invectives at our hands,
Or railing execrations of despite:
Let creeping serpents, hid in hollow banks,
Sting with their tongues; we have remorseless swords,
And they shall plead for us, and our affairs.
Yet thus much, briefly, by my father's leave:
As all the immodest poison of thy throat
Is scandalous and most notorious lies,
And our pretended quarrel truly just,
So end the battle when we meet to-day;
May either of us prosper and prevail,
Or, luckless curst, receive eternal shame!
Edw. That needs no further question; and, I know,
His conscience witnesseth, it is my right.—
Therefore, Valois, say, wilt thou yet resign,
Before the sickle's thrust into the corn,
Or that enkindled fury turn to flame?
John. Edward, I know what right thou hast in France,
And ere I basely will resign my crown,
This champion field shall be a pool of blood,
And all our prospect as a slaughter-house.
Prince. Ay, that approves thee, tyrant, what thou art:
No father, king, or shepherd of thy realm;
But one, that tears her entrails with thy hands,
And, like a thirsty tiger, suck'st her blood.
Aud. You peers of France, why do you follow him
That is so prodigal to spend your lives?
Char. Whom should they follow, agèd impotent,
But he that is their true-born sovereign?
Edw. Upbraid'st thou him, because within his face
Time hath engrav'd deep characters of age?
Know, these grave scholars of experience,
Like stiff-grown oaks, will stand immovable,
When whirlwinds quickly turn up younger trees.
Der. Was ever any of thy father's house
King, but thyself, before this present time?
Edward's great lineage, by the mother's side,

Five hundred years hath held the scepter up :—
Judge then, conspirators, by this descent,
Which is the true-born sovereign, this, or that.
Phi. Good father, range your battles, prate no more,
These English fain would spend the time in words,
That, night approaching, they might scape unfought.
John. Lords, and my loving subjects, now's the time,
That your intended force must bide the touch :
Therefore, my friends, consider this in brief,—
He, that you fight for, is your natural king ;
He, against whom you fight, a foreigner :
He, that you fight for, rules in clemency,
And reins you with a mild and gentle bit ;
He, against whom you fight, if he prevail,
Will straight enthrone himself in tyranny,
Make slaves of you, and, with a heavy hand,
Curtail and curb your sweetest liberty.
Then, to protect your country, and your king,
Let but the haughty courage of your hearts
Answer the number of your able hands,
And we shall quickly chase these fugitives.
For what's this Edward, but a belly-god,
A tender and lascivious wantonness,
That t'other day was almost dead for love ?
And what, I pray you, is his goodly guard ?
Such as, but scant them of their chines of beef,
And take away their downy feather-beds,
And, presently, they are as resty-stiff
As 'twere a many over-ridden jades.
Then, Frenchmen, scorn that such should be your lords,
And rather bind ye them in captive bands.
French. Vive le roi ! God save King John of France !
John. Now on this plain of Cressi spread yourselves,—
And, Edward, when thou dar'st, begin the fight.
[*Exeunt King John, Charles, Philip, Lorrain, Bohemia, and Forces.*
Edw. We presently will meet thee, John of France :—
And, English lords, let us resolve the day
Either to clear us of that scandalous crime
Or be entombèd in our innocence,—
And, Ned, because this battle is the first
That ever yet thou fought'st in pitchèd field,

As ancient custom is of martialists,
To dub thee with the type of chivalry,
In solemn manner we will give thee arms : —
Come, therefore, heralds, orderly bring forth
A strong attirement for the prince my son.—

Flourish. Enter four Heralds, bringing a coat-armor, a helmet, a lance, and a shield: first Herald delivers the armor to King EDWARD ; *who puts it on his Son.*

Edward Plantagenet, in the name of God,
As with this armor I impall thy breast,
So be thy noble unrelenting heart
Wall'd in with flint of matchless fortitude,
That never base affections enter there ;
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st ! —
Now follow, lords, and do him honor too.

Der. [*Receiving the helmet from the second Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,
As I do set this helmet on thy head,
Wherewith the chamber of thy brain is fenc'd,
So may thy temples, with Bellona's hand,
Be still adorn'd with laurel victory ;
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

Aud. [*Receiving the lance from the third Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,
Receive this lance, into thy manlike hand ;
Use it in fashion of a brazen pen,
To draw forth bloody stratagems in France,
And print thy valiant deeds in honor's book ,
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

Art. [*Receiving the shield from the fourth Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,
Hold, take this target, wear it on thy arm ;
And may the view thereof, like Perseus' shield,
Astonish and transform thy gazing foes
To senseless images of meager death ;
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

Edw. Now wants there naught but knighthood ; which, deferr'd,
We leave, till thou hast won it in the field.

Prince. My gracious father, and ye forward peers,

This honor, you have done me, animates
And cheers my green yet-scarce-appearing strength
With comfortable good-presaging signs;
No otherwise than did old Jacob's words,
When as he breath'd his blessings on his sons:
These hallow'd gifts of yours when I profane,
Or use them not to glory of my God,
To patronage the fatherless, and poor,
Or for the benefit of England's peace,
Be numb my joints! wax feeble both mine arms!
Wither my heart! that, like a sapless tree,
I may remain the map of infamy.

Edw. Then thus our steelèd battles shall be rang'd;—
The leading of the vaward, Ned, is thine;
To dignify whose lusty spirit the more,
We temper it with Audley's gravity;
That, courage and experience join'd in one,
Your manage may be second unto none:
For the main battles, I will guide myself;
And, Derby, in the rearward march behind.
That orderly dispos'd, and set in 'ray,
Let us to horse; and God grant us the day!

SCENE IV. *The Same.*

Alarums, as of a battle joined. Enter a many Frenchmen, flying; PRINCE, *and English, pursuing; and exeunt: then enter King* JOHN *and* LORRAIN.

John. O Lorrain, say, what mean our men to fly?
Our number is far greater than our foes.

Lor. The garrison of Genoeses, my lord,
That came from Paris, weary with their march,
Grudging to be so suddenly employ'd,
No sooner in the fore-front took their place,
But, straight retiring, so dismay'd the rest,
As likewise they betook themselves to flight;
In which, for haste to make a safe escape,
More in the clust'ring throng are press'd to death,
Than by the enemy, a thousand-fold.

John. O hapless fortune! Let us yet assay
If we can counsel some of them to stay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The Same.*

Drums. Enter King EDWARD *and* AUDLEY.

Edw. Lord Audley, whiles our son is in the chase,
Withdraw your powers unto this little hill,
And here a season let us breathe ourselves.
Aud. I will, my lord. [*Exit. Retreat.*
Edw. Just-dooming Heaven, whose secret providence
To our gross judgment is unscrutable,
How are we bound to praise thy wondrous works,
That hast this day giv'n way unto the right,
And made the wicked stumble at themselves?

Enter ARTOIS, *hastily.*

Art. Rescue, King Edward! rescue for thy son!
Edw. Rescue, Artois? what, is he prisoner?
Or, else, by violence fell beside his horse?
Art. Neither, my lord; but narrowly beset
With turning Frenchmen, whom he did pursue,
As 'tis impossible that he should scape,
Except your highness presently descend.
Edw. Tut, let him fight; we gave him arms to-day,
And he is laboring for a knighthood, man.

Enter DERBY, *hastily.*

Der. The prince, my lord, the prince! O succor him;
He's close encompass'd with a world of odds!
Edw. Then will he win a world of honor too.
If he by valor can redeem him thence:
If not, what remedy? we have more sons
Than one, to comfort our declining age.

Re-enter AUDLEY, *hastily.*

Aud. Renownèd Edward, give me leave, I pray,
To lead my soldiers, where I may relieve
Your grace's son, in danger to be slain.
The snares of French, like emmets on a bank,
Muster about him; whilst he, lion-like,
Entangled in the net of their assaults,
Franticly rends, and bites the woven toil:
But all in vain, he cannot free himself.
Edw. Audley, content; I will not have a man,

On pain of death, sent forth to succor him:
This is the day ordain'd by destiny
To season his courage with those grievous thoughts,
That, if he breathe out Nestor's years on earth,
Will make him savor still of this exploit.
Der. Ah, but he shall not live to see those days.
Edw. Why, then his epitaph is lasting praise.
Aud. Yet, good my lord, 'tis too much willfulness,
To let his blood be spilt, that may be sav'd.
Edw. Exclaim no more; for none of you can tell,
Whether a borrow'd aid will serve, or no;
Perhaps, he is already slain, or ta'en:
And dare a falcon when she's in her flight,
And ever after she'll be haggard-like;
Let Edward be deliver'd by our hands,
And still, in danger, he'll expect the like;
But if himself himself redeem from thence,
He will have vanquish'd, cheerful, death, and fear,
And ever after dread their force no more,
Than if they were but babes, or captive slaves.
Aud. O cruel father!— Farewell, Edward, then!
Der. Farewell, sweet prince, the hope of chivalry!
Art. O, would my life might ransom him from death!
Edw. But, soft; methinks, I hear [*Retreat sounded.*
The dismal charge of trumpets' loud retreat:
All are not slain, I hope, that went with him;
Some will return with tidings, good, or bad.

Flourish. Enter Prince EDWARD *in triumph, bearing in his hand his shivered lance; his sword, and battered armor, borne before him, and the body of the King of* BOHEMIA, *wrapped in the colors: Lords run and embrace him.*

Aud. O joyful sight! victorious Edward lives!
Der. Welcome, brave prince!
Edw. Welcome, Plantagenet! [*Embracing him.*
Prince. First having done my duty, as beseem'd,
[*Kneels, and kisses his father's hand.*
Lords, I regreet you all with hearty thanks.
And now, behold,— after my winter's toil,
My painful voyage on the boist'rous sea

Of war's devouring gulfs and steely rocks,—
I bring my fraught unto the wishèd port,
My summer's hope, my travel's sweet reward:
And here, with humble duty, I present
This sacrifice, this first-fruit of my sword,
Cropp'd and cut down even at the gate of death,
The King of Bohemia, father, whom I slew;
Whose thousands had entrench'd me round about,
And lay as thick upon my batter'd crest,
As on an anvil, with their pond'rous glaives:
Yet marble courage still did underprop;
And when my weary arms, with often blows,—
Like the continual-lab'ring woodman's ax,
That is enjoin'd to fell a load of oaks,—
Began to falter, straight I would remember
My gifts you gave me, and my zealous vow,
And then new courage made me fresh again;
That, in despite, I carv'd my passage forth,
And put the multitude to speedy flight.
Lo, thus hath Edward's hand fill'd your request,
And done, I hope, the duty of a knight.

Edw. Ay, well thou hast deserv'd a knighthood, Ned!
And, therefore, with thy sword, yet reeking warm
[*Receiving it from the soldier who bore it, and laying it on the kneeling Prince.*
With blood of those that fought to be thy bane,
Arise, Prince Edward, trusty knight at arms:
This day thou hast confounded me with joy,
And prov'd thyself fit heir unto a king.

Prince. Here is a note, my gracious lord, of those
That in this conflict of our foes were slain:
Eleven princes of esteem; fourscore
Barons; a hundred and twenty knights;
And thirty thousand common soldiers;
And, of our men, a thousand.

Edw. Our God be prais'd! Now, John of France, I hope,
Thou know'st King Edward for no wantonness,
No love-sick cockney; nor his soldiers, jades.—
But which way is the fearful King escap'd?

Prince. Towards Poitiers, noble father, and his sons.

Edw. Ned, thou, and Audley, shall pursue them still;

Myself, and Derby, will to Calais straight,
And there begirt that haven-town with siege:
Now lies it on an upshot; therefore strike,
And wistly follow while the game's on foot.
What picture's this? [*Pointing to the colors.*

Prince. A pelican, my lord,
Wounding her bosom with her crooked beak,
That so her nest of young ones may be fed
With drops of blood that issue from her heart;
The motto, "*Sic et vos*, And so should you."

[*Flourish. Exeunt in triumph.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Bretagne. Camp of the English.*

Forces under the Earl of SALISBURY; SALISBURY'S *Tent. Enter* SALISBURY; *to him, the Earl of* MONTFORT, *attended, a coronet in his hand.*

Montfort. My Lord of Salisbury, since by your aid
Mine enemy Sir Charles of Blois is slain,
And I again am quietly possess'd
In Bretagne's dukedom, know, that I resolve,
For this kind furtherance of your king, and you,
To swear allegiance to his majesty:
In sign whereof, receive this coronet,
Bear it unto him; and, withal, my oath,
Never to be but Edward's faithful friend.

Sal. I take it, Montfort: thus, I hope, ere long
The whole dominions of the realm of France
Will be surrender'd to his conquering hand.

[*Exeunt Montfort and Train.*

Now, if I knew but safely how to pass,
I would at Calais gladly meet his grace,
Whither, I am by letters certified,
That he intends to have his host remov'd.
It shall be so: this policy will serve:—
Ho, who's within? Bring Villiers to me.—

Enter VILLIERS.

Villiers, thou know'st, thou art my prisoner,

And that I might, for ransom, if I would,
Require of thee an hundred thousand francs,
Or else retain and keep thee captive still:
But so it is, that for a smaller charge
Thou may'st be quit, an if thou wilt thyself;
And this it is, procure me but a passport
Of Charles the Duke of Normandy, that I,
Without restraint, may have recourse to Calais
Through all the countries where he hath to do,
(Which thou may'st easily obtain, I think,
By reason I have often heard thee say,
He and thyself were students once together)
And then thou shalt be set at liberty.
How say'st thou? wilt thou undertake to do it?

Vil. I will, my lord; but I must speak with him.

Sal. Why, so thou shalt; take horse, and post from hence:
Only, before thou go'st, swear by thy faith,
That, if thou canst not compass my desire,
Thou wilt return my prisoner back again;
And that shall be sufficient warrant for thee.

Vil. To that condition I agree, my lord,
And will unfeignedly perform the same.

Sal. Farewell, Villiers.— [*Exit Villiers.*
This once I mean to try a Frenchman's faith.

SCENE II. *Picardy. The English camp before Calais.*

Enter King EDWARD, *and* DERBY, *with soldiers.*

Edw. Since they refuse our proffer'd league, my lord,
And will not ope their gates, and let us in,
We will intrench ourselves on every side,
That neither victuals, nor supply of men,
May come to succor this accursèd town;
Famine shall combat where our swords are stopp'd.

Der. The promis'd aid, that made them stand aloof,
Is now retir'd, and gone another way;
It will repent them of their stubborn will.

Enter some poor Frenchmen.

But what are these poor ragged slaves, my lord?

Edw. Ask what they are; it seems, they come from Calais.

Der. You wretched patterns of despair and woe,
What are ye? living men; or gliding ghosts,
Crept from your graves to walk upon the earth?
First F. No ghosts, my lord, but men that breathe a life
Far worse than is the quiet sleep of death:
We are distressèd poor inhabitants,
That long have been diseasèd, sick, and lame;
And now, because we are not fit to serve,
The captain of the town hath thrust us forth,
That so expense of victuals may be sav'd.
Edw. A charitable deed, and worthy praise.—
But how do you imagine then to speed?
We are your enemies; in such a case
We can no less but put you to the sword,
Since, when we proffer'd truce, it was refus'd.
First F. An if your grace no otherwise vouchsafe,
As welcome death is unto us as life.
Edw. Poor silly men, much wrong'd, and more distress'd!—
Go, Derby, go, and see they be reliev'd;
Command that victuals be appointed them,
And give to every one five crowns a-piece:—
[*Exeunt Derby and Frenchmen.*
The lion scorns to touch the yielding prey;
And Edward's sword must flesh itself in such
As willful stubbornness hath made perverse.—

Enter the Lord PERCY, *from England.*

Lord Percy! welcome: what's the news in England?
Per. The queen, my lord, commends her to your grace;
And from her highness, and the lord vicegerent,
I bring this happy tidings of success:
David of Scotland, lately up in arms,
(Thinking, belike, he soonest should prevail,
Your highness being absent from the realm)
Is, by the faithful service of your peers,
And painful travel of the queen herself,
That, big with child, was every day in arms,
Vanquish'd, subdu'd, and taken prisoner.
Edw. Thanks, Percy, for thy news, with all my heart!
What was he, took him prisoner in the field?

Per. A squire, my lord; John Copland is his name:
Who since, entreated by her majesty,
Denies to make surrender of his prize
To any but unto your grace alone;
Whereat the queen is grievously displeas'd.
Edw. Well, then we'll have a pursuivant despatch'd,
To summon Copland hither out of hand,
And with him he shall bring his prisoner king.
Per. The queen's, my lord, herself by this at sea;
And purposeth, as soon as wind will serve,
To land at Calais, and to visit you.
Edw. She shall be welcome; and, to wait her coming,
I'll pitch my tent near to the sandy shore.

Enter a French Captain.

Cap. The burgesses of Calais, mighty king,
Have, by a council, willingly decreed
To yield the town, and castle, to your hands;
Upon condition, it will please your grace
To grant them benefit of life, and goods.
Edw. They will so! then, belike, they may command,
Dispose, elect, and govern as they list.
No, sirrah; tell them, since they did refuse
Our princely clemency at first proclaim'd,
They shall not have it now, although they would;
I will accept of naught but fire and sword,
Except, within these two days, six of them,
That are the wealthiest merchants in the town,
Come naked, all but for their linen shirts,
With each a halter hang'd about his neck,
And prostrate yield themselves, upon their knees,
To be afflicted, hang'd, or what I please;
And so you may inform their mastership.

[*Exeunt Edward and Percy.*

Cap. Why, this it is to trust a broken staff.
Had we not been persuaded, John our king
Would with his army have reliev'd the town,
We had not stood upon defiance so:
But now 'tis past that no man can recall;
And better some do go to wrack, than all. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Poiton. Fields near Poitiers. The French Camp; Tent of the Duke of* NORMANDY.

Enter CHARLES *and* VILLIERS.

Char. I wonder, Villiers, thou shouldst impórtune me
For one that is our deadly enemy.
Vil. Not for his sake, my gracious lord, so much
Am I become an earnest advocate,
As that thereby my ransom will be quit.
Char. Thy ransom, man! why, need'st thou talk of that?
Art thou not free? and are not all occasions
That happen for advantage on our foes,
To be accepted of, and stood upon?
Vil. No, good my lord, except the same be just;
For profit must with honor be comix'd,
Or else our actions are but scandalous:
But, letting pass these intricate objections,
Will't please your highness to subscribe, or no?
Char. Villiers, I will not, nor I cannot do it;
Salisbury shall not have his will so much,
To claim a passport how it please himself.
Vil. Why, then I know the extremity, my lord,
I must return to prison whence I came.
Char. Return! I hope, thou wilt not, Villiers:
What bird, that hath escap'd the fowler's gin,
Will not be ware how she's ensnar'd again?
Or, what is he, so senseless, and secure,
That, having hardly pass'd a dangerous gulf,
Will put himself in peril there again?
Vil. Ah, but it is mine oath, my gracious lord,
Which I in conscience may not violate,
Or else a kingdom should not draw me hence.
Char. Thine oath! why, that doth bind thee to abide
Hast thou not sworn obedience to thy prince?
Vil. In all things that uprightly he commands:
But either to persuade, or threaten me,
Not to perform the covenant of my word,
Is lawless, and I need not to obey.
Char. Why, is it lawful for a man to kill,
And not, to break a promise with his foe?
Vil. To kill, my lord, when war is once proclaim'd,

So that our quarrel be for wrongs receiv'd,
No doubt, is lawfully permitted us:
But, in an oath, we must be well advis'd
How we do swear; and, when we once have sworn,
Not to infringe it, though we die therefor:
Therefore, my lord, as willing I return,
As if I were to fly to paradise. [*Going.*

Char. Stay, my Villiers; thy honorable mind
Deserves to be eternally admir'd.
Thy suit shall be no longer thus deferr'd;
Give me the paper, I'll subscribe to it:
[*Signs, and gives it back.*
And, wheretofore I lov'd thee as Villiers,
Hereafter I'll embrace thee as myself;
Stay, and be still in favor with thy lord.

Vil. I humbly thank your grace: I must despatch,
And send this passport first unto the earl,
And then I will attend your highness' pleasure. [*Exit.*

Char. Do so, Villiers; — and Charles, when he hath need,
Be such his soldiers, howsoe'er he speed!

Enter King JOHN.

John. Come, Charles, and arm thee; Edward is entrapp'd,
The Prince of Wales is fall'n into our hands,
And we have compass'd him, he cannot scape.

Char. But will your highness fight to-day?

John. What else, my son? he's scarce eight thousand strong,
And we are threescore thousand at the least.

Char. I have a prophecy, my gracious lord,
Wherein is written, what success is like
To happen us in this outrageous war;
It was deliver'd me at Cressi' field,
By one that is an agèd hermit there. [*Reads.*

"When feather'd fowl shall make thine army tremble,
And flint stones rise, and break the battle 'ray,
Then think on him that doth not now dissemble;
For that shall be the hapless dreadful day:
Yet, in the end, thy foot thou shalt advance
As far in England, as thy foe in France."

John. By this it seems we shall be fortunate:
For as it is impossible, that stones
Should ever rise, and break the battle 'ray;
Or airy fowl make men in arms to quake;
So is it like, we shall not be subdu'd:
Or, say this might be true, yet, in the end,
Since he doth promise, we shall drive him hence,
And forage their country, as they have done ours,
By this revenge that loss will seem the less.
But all are frivolous fancies, toys, and dreams:
Once, we are sure we have ensnar'd the son,
Catch we the father after how we can. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The Same. The English camp.*

Enter Prince EDWARD, AUDLEY, *and others.*

Prince. Audley, the arms of death embrace us round,
And comfort have we none, save that to die,
We pay sour earnest for a sweeter life.
At Cressi' field our clouds of warlike smoke
Chok'd up those French moths, and dissever'd them:
But now their multitudes of millions hide,
Masking as 'twere, the beauteous burning sun;
Leaving no hope to us, but sullen dark,
And eyeless terror of all-ending night.
Aud. This sudden, mighty, and expedient head,
That they have made, fair prince, is wonderful.
Before us in the valley lies the king,
Vantag'd with all that heaven and earth can yield;
His party stronger battled than our whole:
His son, the braving Duke of Normandy,
Hath trimm'd the mountain on our right hand up
In shining plate, that now the aspiring hill
Shows like a silver quarry, or an orb;
Aloft the which, the banners, bannerets,
And new-replenish'd pendants, cuff the air,
And beat the winds, that, for their gaudiness,
Struggles to kiss them: on our left hand lies
Philip, the younger issue of the king,
Coating the other hill in such array,

That all his gilded upright pikes do seem
Straight trees of gold, the pendant streamers, leaves;
And their device of antique heraldry,
Quarter'd in colors seeming sundry fruits,
Makes it the orchard of the Hesperides:
Behind us too the hill doth bear his height,
(For, like a half-moon, op'ning but one way,
It rounds us in) there at our backs are lodg'd
The fatal cross-bows; and the battle there
Is govern'd by the rough Chatillion.
Then thus it stands,— the valley for our flight
The king binds in; the hills on either hand
Are proudly royalizèd by his sons;
And on the hill behind stands certain death,
In pay and service with Chatillion.

Prince. Death's name is much more mighty than his deeds;—
Thy parceling this power hath made it more.
As many sands as these my hands can hold,
Are but my handful of so many sands;
Then, all the world,— and call it but a power,—
Easily ta'en up, and quickly thrown away:
But, if I stand to count them sand by sand,
The number would confound my memory,
And make a thousand millions of a task,
Which, briefly, is no more, indeed, than one.
These quarters, squadrons, and these regiments,
Before, behind us, and on either hand,
Are but a power: when we name a man,
His hand, his foot, his head, have several strengths;
And being all but one self instant strength,
Why, all this many, Audley, is but one,
And we can call it all but one man's strength.
He, that hath far to go, tells it by miles;
If he should tell the steps, it kills his heart:
The drops are infinite, that make a flood;
And yet, thou know'st, we call it but a rain.
There is but one France, and one King of France,
That France hath no more kings; and that same king
Hath but the puissant legion of one king;
And we have one: then apprehend no odds;
For one to one is fair equality.—

Enter a Herald.

What tidings, messenger? be plain, and brief.
Her. The King of France, my sovereign lord and master,
Greets thus by me his foe the Prince of Wales:
If thou call forth an hundred men of name,
Of lords, knights, 'squires, and English gentlemen,
And with thyself and those kneel at his feet,
He straight will fold his bloody colors up,
And ransom shall redeem lives forfeited:
If not, this day shall drink more English blood
Than e'er was buried in our British earth.
What is the answer to his proffer'd mercy?
Prince. This heaven, that covers France, contains the mercy
That draws from me submissive orisons;
That such base breath should vanish from my lips,
To urge the plea of mercy to a man,
The Lord forbid! Return, and tell thy king,
My tongue is made of steel, and it shall beg
My mercy on his coward burgonet;
Tell him, my colors are as red as his,
My men as bold, our English arms as strong,
Return him my defiance in his face.
Her. I go. [*Exit.*

Enter another Herald.

Prince. What news with thee?
Her. The Duke of Normandy, my lord and master,
Pitying thy youth is so engirt with peril,
By me hath sent a nimble-jointed jennet,
As swift as ever yet thou didst bestride,
And therewithal he counsels thee to fly;
Else, death himself hath sworn, that thou shalt die.
Prince. Back with the beast unto the beast that sent him;
Tell him, I cannot sit a coward's horse:
Bid him to-day bestride the jade himself;
For I will stain my horse quite o'er with blood,
And double-gild my spurs, but I will catch him;
So tell the carping boy, and get thee gone.
[*Exit Herald.*

Enter another Herald.

Her. Edward of Wales, Philip, the second son
To the most mighty Christian King of France,
Seeing thy body's living date expir'd,
All full of charity and Christian love,
Commends this book, full fraught with prayers,
To thy fair hand, and, for thy hour of life,
Entreats thee that thou meditate therein,
And arm thy soul for her long journey towards.
Thus have I done his bidding, and return.

Prince. Herald of Philip, greet thy lord from me;
All good, that he can send, I can receive:
But think'st thou not, the unadvisèd boy
Hath wrong'd himself, in thus far tend'ring me?
Haply, he cannot pray without the book;
I think him no divine extemporal:
Then render back this commonplace of prayer,
To do himself good in adversity;
Besides, he knows not my sin's quality,
And therefore knows no prayers for my avail;
Ere night his prayer may be, to pray to God
To put it in my heart to hear his prayer;
So tell the courtly wanton, and be gone.

Her. I go. [*Exit.*

Prince. How confident their strength and number makes them!—
Now, Audley, sound those silver strings of thine,
And let those milk-white messengers of time
Show thy time's learning in this dangerous time;
Thyself art bruis'd and bit with many broils,
And stratagems forepast with iron pens
Are texted in thine honorable face;
Thou art a married man in this distress,
But danger woos me as a blushing maid:
Teach me an answer to this perilous time.

Aud. To die is all as common, as to live;
The one in choice, the other holds in chase:
For, from the instant we begin to live,
We do pursue and hunt the time to die:
First bud we, then we blow, and after seed;
Then, presently, we fall; and, as a shade

Follows the body, so we follow death.
If then we hunt for death, why do we fear it?
If we fear it, why do we follow it?
If we do fear, with fear we do but aid
The thing we fear to seize on us the sooner:
If we fear not, then no resolvèd proffer
Can overthrow the limit of our fate:
For, whether ripe, or rotten, drop we shall,
As we do draw the lottery of our doom.

Prince. Ah, good old man, a thousand thousand armors
These words of thine have buckled on my back:
Ah, what an idiot hast thou made of life,
To seek the thing it fears! and how disgrac'd
The imperial victory of murd'ring death!
Since all the lives, his conquering arrows strike,
Seek him, and he not them, to shame his glory.
I will not give a penny for a life,
Nor half a halfpenny to shun grim death;
Since for to live is but to seek to die,
And dying but beginning of new life:
Let come the hour when he that rules it will!
To live, or die, I hold indifferent. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *The Same. The French camp.*

Enter King JOHN *and* CHARLES.

John. A sudden darkness hath defac'd the sky,
The winds are crept into their caves for fear,
The leaves move not, the wood is hush'd and still,
The birds cease singing, and the wand'ring brooks
Murmur no wonted greeting to their shores;
Silence attends some wonder, and expecteth
That Heaven should pronounce some prophecy:
Whence, or from whom, proceeds this silence, Charles?

Char. Our men, with open mouths, and staring eyes,
Look on each other, as they did attend
Each other's words, and yet no creature speaks;
A tongue-tied fear hath made a midnight hour,
And speeches sleep through all the waking regions.

John. But now the pompous sun, in all his pride,
Look'd through his golden coach upon the world,

And, on a sudden, hath he hid himself;
That now the under earth is as a grave,
Dark, deadly, silent, and uncomfortable.
[*A clamor of ravens heard.*
Hark! what a deadly outcry do I hear!
Char. Here comes my brother Philip.
John. All dismay'd: —

Enter PHILIP.

What fearful words are those thy looks presage?
Phi. A flight, a flight!
John. Coward, what flight? thou liest, there needs no flight.
Phi. A flight!
John. Awake thy craven powers, and tell on
The very substance of that fear indeed,
Which is so ghastly printed in thy face:
What is the matter?
Phi. A flight of ugly ravens
Do croak and hover o'er our soldiers' heads,
And keep in triangles, and corner'd squares,
Right as our forces are embattled;
With their approach there came this sudden fog,
Which now hath hid the airy floor of heaven,
And made at noon a night unnatural
Upon the quaking and dismayèd world:
In brief, our soldiers have let fall their arms,
And stand like metamorphos'd images,
Bloodless and pale, one gazing on another.
John. Ay, now I call to mind the prophecy;
But I must give no entrance to a fear.—
Return, and hearten up those yielding souls;
Tell them, the ravens, seeing them in arms,—
So many fair against a famish'd few,—
Come but to dine upon their handiwork,
And prey upon the carrion that they kill:
For when we see a horse laid down to die,
Although he be not dead, the ravenous birds
Sit watching the departure of his life;
Even so these ravens, for the carcasses
Of those poor English, that are mark'd to die,
Hover about, and, if they cry to us,

'Tis but for meat that we must kill for them.
Away, and comfort up my soldiers,
And sound the trumpets; and at once despatch
This little business of a silly fraud. [*Exit Philip.*

Noise within. Enter a French Captain, with SALISBURY, *prisoner.*

Cap. Behold, my liege, this knight, and forty more,—
Of whom the better part are slain and fled,—
With all endeavor sought to break our ranks,
And make their way to the encompass'd prince;
Dispose of him as please your majesty.
John. Go, and the next bough, soldier, that thou seest,
Disgrace it with his body presently:
For I do hold a tree in France too good
To be the gallows of an English thief.
Sal. My Lord of Normandy, I have your pass
And warrant for my safety through this land.
Char. Villiers procur'd it for thee, did he not?
Sal. He did.
Char. And it is current, thou shalt freely pass.
John. Ay, freely to the gallows to be hang'd,
Without denial, or impediment:—
Away with him.
Char. I hope, your highness will not so disgrace me,
And dash the virtue of my seal at arms:
He hath my never-broken name to show,
Charácter'd with this princely hand of mine;
And rather let me leave to be a prince,
Than break the stable verdict of a prince:
I do beseech you, let him pass in quiet.
John. Thou and thy word lie both in my command;
What canst thou promise, that I cannot break?
Which of these twain is greater infamy,
To disobey thy father, or thyself?
Thy word, nor no man's, may exceed his power;
Nor that same man doth never break his word,
That keeps it to the utmost of his power:
The breach of faith dwells in the soul's consent;
Which if thyself without consent do break,
Thou art not chargèd with the breach of faith.—

Go, hang him; for thy license lies in me:
And my constraint stands the excuse for thee.
Char. What, am I not a soldier in my word?
Then, arms adieu, and let them fight that list:
Shall I not give my girdle from my waist,
But with a guardian I shall be controll'd,
To say, I may not give my things away?
Upon my soul, had Edward Prince of Wales
Engag'd his word, writ down his noble hand,
For all your knights to pass his father's land,
The royal king, to grace his warlike son,
Would not alone safe-conduct give to them,
But with all bounty feasted them and theirs.
John. Dwell'st thou on precedents? Then be it so.—
Say, Englishman, of what degree thou art?
Sal. An earl in England, though a prisoner here;
And those, that know me, call me Salisbury.
John. Then, Salisbury, say, whither thou art bound?
Sal. To Calais, where my liege, King Edward, is.
John. To Calais, Salisbury? Then to Calais pack,
And bid the king prepare a noble grave,
To put his princely son, black Edward, in.
And as thou travel'st westward from this place,
Some two leagues hence there is a lofty hill,
Whose top seems topless, for the embracing sky
Doth hide his high head in her azure bosom;
Unto whose tall top when thy foot attains,
Look back upon the humble vale below,
(Humble of late, but now made proud with arms)
And thence behold the wretched Prince of Wales,
Hoop'd with a band of iron round about.
After which sight to Calais spur amain,
And say, the prince was smother'd, and not slain:
And tell the king, this is not all his ill;
For I will greet him, ere he thinks I will.
Away, be gone; the smoke but of our shot
Will choke our foes, though bullets hit them not.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The Same. A Part of the Field of Battle.*

Alarums, as of a battle joined, skirmishings.
Enter Pince EDWARD *and* ARTOIS.

Art. How fares your grace? are you not shot, my lord?
Prince. No, dear Artois; but chok'd with dust and smoke,
And stepp'd aside for breath and fresher air.
Art. Breathe then, and to't again: the amazèd French
Are quite distract with gazing on the crows;
And, were our quivers full of shafts again,
Your grace should see a glorious day of this: —
O, for more arrows, lord! that is our want.
Prince. Courage, Artois! a fig for feather'd shafts,
When feather'd fowls do bandy on our side!
What need we fight, and sweat, and keep a coil,
When railing crows out-scold our adversaries?
Up, up, Artois! the ground itself is arm'd:
Fire-containing flint; command our bows
To hurl away their pretty-color'd yew,
And to't with stones: away, Artois, away;
My soul doth prophesy we win the day. [*Exeunt.*

Alarums, and Parties skirmishing. Enter King JOHN.

John. Our multitudes are in themselves confounded
Dismayèd, and distraught; swift-starting fear
Hath buzz'd a cold dismay through all our army,
And every petty disadvantage prompts
The fear-possessèd abject soul to fly:
Myself, whose spirit is steel to their dull lead,
(What with recalling of the prophecy,
And that our native stones from English arms
Rebel against us) find myself attainted
With strong surprise of weak and yielding fear.

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Fly, father, fly! the French do kill the French;
Some that would stand, let drive at some that fly:
Our drums strike nothing but discouragement,
Our trumpets sound dishonor and retire;

The spirit of fear, that feareth naught but death,
Cowardly works confusion on itself.

Enter PHILIP.

Phi. Pluck out your eyes, and see not this day's shame!
An arm hath beat an army; one poor David
Hath with a stone foil'd twenty stout Goliahs:
Some twenty naked starvelings, with small flints,
Have driven back a puissant host of men,
Array'd and fenc'd in all accomplements.
John. Mordieu, they quoit at us, and kill us up;
No less than forty thousand wicked elders
Have forty lean slaves this day ston'd to death.
Char. O, that I were some other countryman!
This day hath set derision on the French;
And all the world will blurt and scorn at us.
John. What, is there no hope left?
Phi. No hope, but death, to bury up our shame.
John. Make up once more with me; the twentieth part
Of those that live, are men enough to quail
The feeble handful on the adverse part.
Char. Then charge again: if Heaven be not oppos'd,
We cannot lose the day.
John. On, on; away. [*Exeunt.*

Alarums, &c. *Enter* AUDLEY, *wounded, and two Esquires, his rescuers.*

First Esq. How fares my lord?
Aud. E'en as a man may do,
That dines at such a bloody feast as this.
Sec. Esq. I hope, my lord, that is no mortal scar.
Aud. No matter, if it be; the count is cast,
And, in the worst, ends but a mortal man.
Good friends, convey me to the princely Edward,
That, in the crimson bravery of my blood,
I may become him with saluting him;
I'll smile, and tell him, that this open scar
Doth end the harvest of his Audley's war. [*Exeunt.*

[*Other alarums; afterwards, a retreat.*

SCENE VII. *The Same. The English Camp.*

Flourish. Enter Prince EDWARD, *in triumph, leading prisoners, King* JOHN *and his son* CHARLES; *and officers, soldiers, &c., with ensigns spread.*

Prince. Now, John in France, and lately John of France,
Thy bloody ensigns are my captive colors;
And you, high-vaunting Charles of Normandy,
That once to-day sent me a horse to fly,
Are now the subjects of my clemency.
Fie, lords! is't not a shame, that English boys,
Whose early days are yet not worth a beard,
Should in the bosom of your kingdom thus,
One against twenty, beat you up together?
John. Thy fortune, not thy force, hath conquer'd us.
Prince. An argument, that Heaven aids the right.—

Enter ARTOIS, *with* PHILIP.

See, see, Artois doth bring along with him
The late good counsel-giver to my soul!—
Welcome, Artois;—and welcome, Philip, too:
Who now, of you, or I, have need to pray?
Now is the proverb verified in you,
Too bright a morning breeds a louring day.—

Enter AUDLEY, *led by the two Esquires.*

But, say, what grim discouragement comes here!
Alas, what thousand armèd men of France
Have writ that note of death in Audley's face?—
Speak, thou that woo'st death with thy careless smile,
And look'st so merrily upon thy grave
As if thou wert enamor'd on thine end,
What hungry sword hath so bereav'd thy face,
And lopp'd a true friend from my loving soul?
Aud. O prince, thy sweet bemoaning speech to me
Is as a mournful knell to one dead-sick.
Prince. Dear Audley, if my tongue ring out thy end,
My arms shall be thy grave: what may I do,
To win thy life, or to revenge thy death?
If thou wilt drink the blood of captive kings,—
Or, that it were restorative, command

A health of king's blood, and I'll drink to thee:
If honor may dispense for thee with death,
The never-dying honor of this day
Share wholly, Audley, to thyself, and live.

Aud. Victorious prince,— that thou art so, behold
A Cæsar's fame in kings' captivity,—
If I could hold dim death but at a bay,
'Till I did see my liege thy royal father,
My soul should yield this castle of my flesh,
This mangled tribute, with all willingness,
To darkness, consummation, dust, and worms.

Prince. Cheerly, bold man! thy soul is all too proud,
To yield her city for one little breach;
She'ld be divorcèd from her earthly spouse
By the soft temper of a Frenchman's sword?
Lo, to repair thy life, I give to thee
Three thousand marks a year in English land.

Aud. I take thy gift, to pay the debts I owe:
These two poor 'squires redeem'd me from the French,
With lusty and dear hazard of their lives;
What thou hast given to me, I give to them;
And, as thou lov'st me, prince, lay thy consent
To this bequeath in my last testament.

Prince. Renownèd Audley, live, and have from me
This gift twice doubled, to these 'squires, and thee:
But, live, or die, what thou hast given away,
To these, and theirs, shall lasting freedom stay.—
Come, gentlemen, I'll see my friend bestow'd
Within an easy litter; then we'll march
Proudly toward Calais, with triumphant pace,
Unto my royal father, and there bring
The tribute of my wars, fair France's king. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Picardy. The English Camp before Calais.*

Enter King EDWARD, *with* PHILIPPA *his Queen and* DERBY; *Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

Edward. No more, Queen Philippa, pacify yourself;
Copland, except he can excuse his fault,
Shall find displeasure written in our looks.—

And now unto this proud resisting town:
Soldiers, assault; I will no longer stay,
To be deluded by their false delays;
Put all to sword, and make the spoil your own.

Trumpets sound to arms. Enter, from the town, six Citizens, in their shirts, and bare-footed, with halters about their necks.

Cit. Mercy, King Edward! mercy, gracious lord!
Edw. Contemptuous villains! call ye now for truce?
Mine ears are stopp'd against your bootless cries: —
Sound, drums; [*Alarum*] draw, threat'ning swords!
First Cit. Ah, noble prince,
Take pity on this town, and hear us, mighty king!
We claim the promise that your highness made;
The two days' respite is not yet expir'd,
And we are come, with willingness, to bear
What torturing death, or punishment, you please,
So that the trembling multitude be sav'd.
Edw. My promise? well, I do confess as much:
But I requir'd the chiefest citizens,
And men of most account, that should submit;
You, peradventure, are but servile grooms,
Or some felonious robbers on the sea,
Whom, apprehended, law would execute,
Albeit severity lay dead in us:
No, no, ye cannot over-reach us thus.
Sec. Cit. The sun, dread lord, that in the western fall
Beholds us now low brought through misery,
Did in the orient purple of the morn
Salute our coming forth, when we were known;
Or may our portion be with damnèd fiends.
Edw. If it be so, then let our covenant stand,
We take possession of the town in peace:
But, for yourselves, look you for no remorse;
But, as imperial justice hath decreed,
Your bodies shall be dragg'd about these walls,
And after feel the stroke of quartering steel:
This is your doom; — go, soldiers, see it done.
Queen. Ah, be more mild unto these yielding men!
It is a glorious thing, to 'stablish peace;

And kings approach the nearest unto God,
By giving life and safety unto men:
As thou intendest to be King of France,
So let her people live to call thee king;
For what the sword cuts down, or fire hath spoil'd,
Is held in reputation none of ours.
Edw. Although experience teach us this is true,
That peaceful quietness brings most delight
When most of all abuses are controll'd,
Yet, insomuch it shall be known, that we
As well can master our affections,
As conquer other by the dint of sword,
Philippa, prevail; we yield to thy request;
These men shall live to boast of clemency,—
And, tyranny, strike terror to thyself.
Cit. Long live your highness! happy be your reign!
Edw. Go, get you hence, return unto the town;
And if this kindness hath deserv'd your love,
Learn then to reverence Edward as your king.—
[*Exeunt Citizens.*
Now, might we hear of our affairs abroad,
We would, 'till gloomy winter were o'er-spent,
Dispose our men in garrison a while.
But who comes here?

Enter COPLAND *and King* DAVID.

Der. Copland, my lord, and David King of Scots.
Edw. Is this the proud presumptuous squire o' the north,
That would not yield his prisoner to my queen?
Cop. I am, my liege, a northern 'squire, indeed,
But neither proud nor insolent, I trust.
Edw. What mov'd thee then, to be so obstinate
To contradict our royal queen's desire?
Cop. No willful disobedience, mighty lord,
But my desert, and public law of arms:
I took the king myself in single fight;
And, like a soldier, would be loath to lose
The least pre-eminence that I had won:
And Copland, straight upon your highness' charge,
Is come to France, and, with a lowly mind,
Doth vail the bonnet of his victory.

Receive, dread lord, the custom of my fraught,
The wealthy tribute of my laboring hands;
Which should long since have been surrender'd up,
Had but your gracious self been there in place.
Queen. But, Copland, thou didst scorn the king's command,
Neglecting our commission in his name.
Cop. His name I reverence, but his person more,
His name shall keep me in allegiance still,
But to his person I will bend my knee.
Edw. I pray thee, Philippa, let displeasure pass;
This man doth please me, and I like his words:
For what is he, that will attempt high deeds,
And lose the glory that ensues the same?
All rivers have recourse unto the sea;
And Copland's faith, relation to his king.—
Kneel therefore down; now rise, King Edward's knight:
And, to maintain thy state, I freely give
Five hundred marks a year to thee and thine.—

Enter SALISBURY.

Welcome, Lord Salisbury: what news from Bretagne?
Sal. This, mighty king: the country we have won;
And John de Montfort, regent of that place,
Presents your highness with this coronet,
Protesting true allegiance to your grace.
Edw. We thank thee for thy service, valiant earl;
Challenge our favor, for we owe it thee.
Sal. But now, my lord, as this is joyful news,
So must my voice be tragical again,
And I must sing of doleful accidents.
Edw. What, have our men the overthrow at Poitiers?
Or is my son beset with too much odds?
Sal. He was, my lord: and as my worthless self,
With forty other serviceable knights,
Under safe-conduct of the Dauphin's seal
Did travel that way, finding him distress'd,
A troop of lances met us on the way,
Surpris'd, and brought us prisoners to the king;
Who, proud of this, and eager of revenge,
Commanded straight to cut off all our heads:
And surely we had died, but that the duke,

More full of honor than his angry sire,
Procur'd our quick deliverance from thence :
But, ere we went, "Salute your king," quoth he,
" Bid him provide a funeral for his son,
To-day our sword shall cut his thread of life ;
And, sooner than he thinks, we'll be with him,
To quittance those displeasures he hath done:"
This said, we pass'd, not daring to reply;
Our hearts were dead, our looks diffus'd and wan.
Wand'ring, at last we climb'd unto a hill;
From whence, although our grief were much before,
Yet now to see the occasion with our eyes
Did thrice so much increase our heaviness:
For there, my lord, O, there we did descry
Down in a valley how both armies lay.
The French had cast their trenches like a ring;
And every barricado's open front
Was thick emboss'd with brazen ordnance:
Here stood a battle of ten thousand horse;
There twice as many pikes, in quadrantwise:
Here cross-bows, arm'd with deadly-wounding darts:
And in the midst, like to a slender point
Within the compass of the horizon,—
As't were a rising bubble in the sea,
A hazel-wand amidst a wood of pines,—
Or as a bear fast chain'd unto a stake,
Stood famous Edward, still expecting when
Those dogs of France would fasten on his flesh.
Anon, the death-procuring knell begins:
Off go the cannons, that, with trembling noise,
Did shake the very mountain where we stood;
Then sound the trumpets' clangors in the air,
The battles join: and, when we could no more
Discern the difference 'twixt the friend and foe,
(So intricate the dark confusion was)
Away we turn'd our wat'ry eyes, with sighs
As black as powder fuming into smoke.
And thus, I fear, unhappy have I told
The most untimely tale of Edward's fall.

Queen. Ah me! is this my welcome into France?
Is this the comfort, that I look'd to have,
When I should meet with my belovèd son?

Sweet Ned, I would, thy mother in the sea
Had been prevented of this mortal grief!
Edw. Content thee, Philippa; 'tis not tears, will serve
To call him back, if he be taken hence:
Comfort thyself, as I do, gentle queen,
With hope of sharp, unheard-of, dire revenge.—
He bids me to provide his funeral;
And so I will: but all the peers in France
Shall mourners be, and weep out bloody tears,
Until their empty veins be dry and sere:
The pillars of his hearse shall be their bones;
The mold that covers him their cities' ashes;
His knell, the groaning cries of dying men;
And, in the stead of tapers on his tomb,
An hundred fifty towers shall burning blaze,
While we bewail our valiant son's decease.

Flourish of trumpets within. Enter a Herald.

Her. Rejoice, my lord; ascend the imperial throne!
The mighty and redoubted Prince of Wales,
Great servitor to bloody Mars in arms,
The Frenchman's terror, and his country's fame,
Triumphant rideth like a Roman peer:
And, lowly at his stirrup, comes afoot
King John of France, together with his son,
In captive bonds; whose diadem he brings,
To crown thee with, and to proclaim thee king.
Edw. Away with mourning, Philippa, wipe thine eyes;—
Sound, trumpets, welcome in Plantagenet!

A loud flourish. Enter PRINCE, AUDLEY, ARTOIS, *with King* JOHN, *and* PHILIP.

As things, long lost, when they are found again,
So doth my son rejoice his father's heart,
For whom, even now, my soul was much perplex'd!
[*Running to the Prince, and embracing him.*
Queen. Be this a token to express my joy.
[*Kissing him.*
For inward passions will not let me speak.
Prince. My gracious father, here receive the gift,
[*Presenting him with King John's crown.*

This wreath of conquest, and reward of war,
Got with as mickle peril of our lives,
As e'er was thing of price before this day;
Install your highness in your proper right:
And, herewithal, I render to your hands
These prisoners, chief occasion of our strife

Edw. So, John of France, I see, you keep your word.
You promis'd to be sooner with ourself
Than we did think for, and 'tis so indeed:
But, had you done at first as now you do,
How many civil towns had stood untouch'd,
That now are turn'd to ragged heaps of stones?
How many people's lives might you have sav'd,
That are untimely sunk into their graves?

John. Edward, recount not things irrevocable;
Tell me what ransom thou requir'st to have?

Edw. Thy ransom, John, hereafter shall be known:
But first to England thou must cross the seas,
To see what entertainment it affords;
Howe'er it falls, it cannot be so bad
As ours hath been since we arriv'd in France.

John. Accursèd man! of this I was foretold,
But did misconster what the prophet told.

Prince. Now, father, this petition Edward makes,—
To Thee, [*kneels*] whose grace hath been his strongest shield,
That, as Thy pleasure chose me for the man
To be the instrument to show Thy power,
So Thou wilt grant, that many princes more,
Bred and brought up within that little isle,
May still be famous for like victories!—
And, for my part, the bloody scars I bear,
The weary nights that I have watch'd in field,
The dangerous conflicts I have often had,
The fearful menaces were proffer'd me,
The heat, and cold, and what else might displease,
I wish were now redoubled twenty-fold;
So that hereafter ages, when they read
The painful traffic of my tender youth,
Might thereby be inflamed with such resolve,
As not the territories of France alone,
But likewise Spain, Turkey, and what countries else

That justly would provoke fair England's ire,
Might, at their presence, tremble and retire!

Edw. Here, English lords, we do proclaim a rest,
And interceasing of our painful arms:
Sheathe up your swords, refresh your weary limbs,
Peruse your spoils; and, after we have breath'd
A day or two within this haven town,
God willing, then for England we'll be shipp'd;
Where, in a happy hour, I trust, we shall
Arrive, three kings, two princes, and a queen.

[*Flourish. Exeunt omnes.*

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